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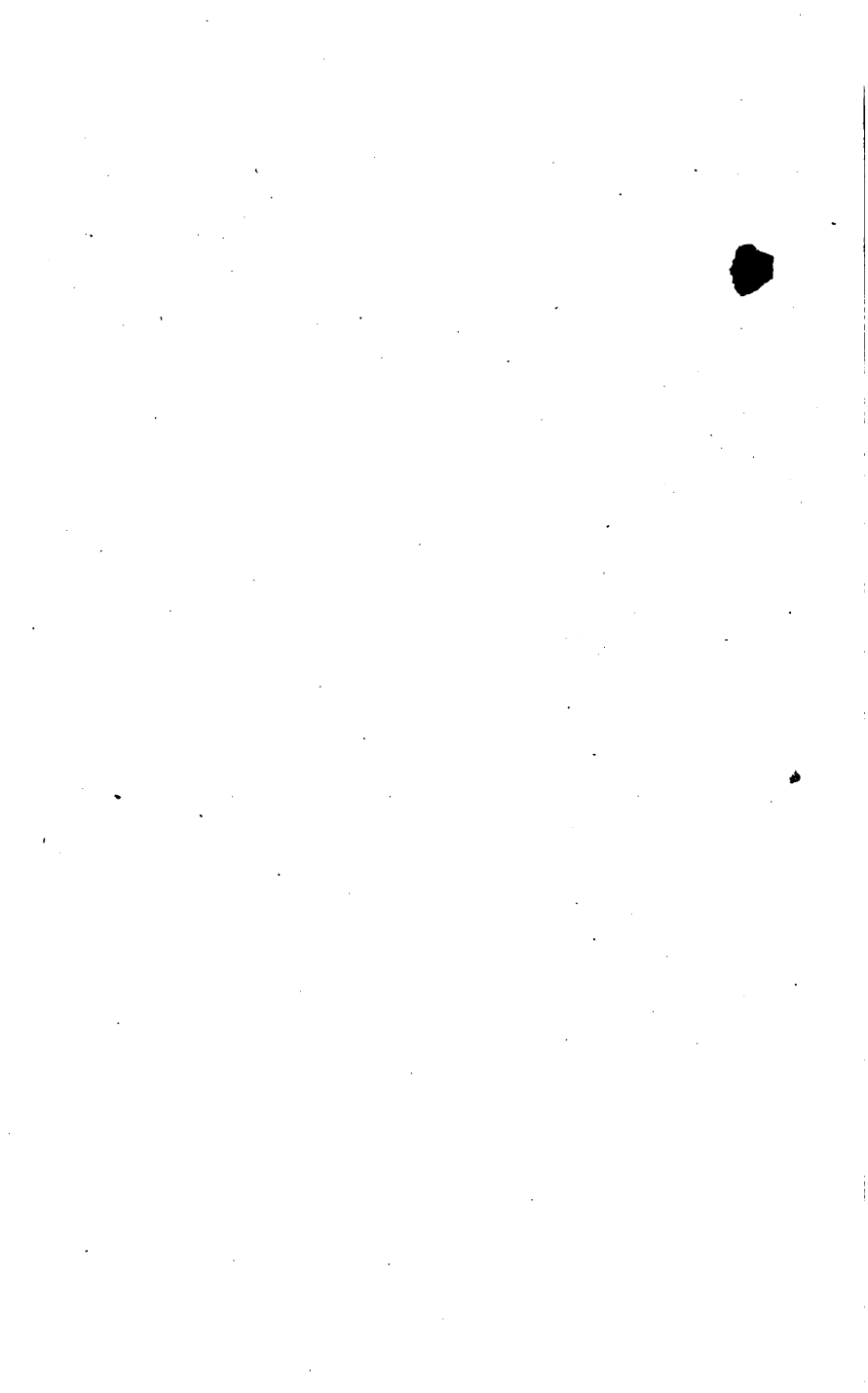
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A

DENOMINATIONAL OFFERING:

FROM THE

Literature of Universalism.

IN TWELVE PARTS.

By REV. NORRIS C. HODGDON.



BOSTON :
UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE,
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1871.

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Dedication.

TO ALL THOSE WHO LOVE AND CHERISH THE DOCTRINE WHICH
THESE PAGES ILLUSTRATE AND INCULCATE, AND TO THE AUTHORS
AND PUBLISHERS OF OUR LITERATURE,

THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

BY THEIR FRIEND,

THE COMPILER.



PREFACE.

A LEADING object in presenting this volume to the Universalist Church, at the present time, is to give a true idea of our thought in the past, and the variety of topics to be found in our literature. From the contents of the book, it will be seen that we have gathered in a bountiful harvest from a broad field. The selections, however, from the nature and character of our work, are necessarily fragmentary.

As will be observed, the work treats of Universalism only, as the leading topic. It gathers up of what has been written about the "like precious faith once delivered to the saints," and presents a "bird's-eye view" of nearly all that has been offered upon the positive side, in our books, periodicals, and tracts, from which we have drawn so freely, and to which we are greatly indebted.

After having long labored in collecting the great body of these materials, it was found that they could be put into book form; and this was our first thought to that end. We had no definite plan for the arrangement of our work, until we saw that the letters in the word Universalism "symbolized a great and precious truth concerning the Deity;" and since there are twelve letters in this word, "for each of which we have a great truth embodying the whole," we decided at once to divide our materials into twelve parts, giving to each part twelve sections.

These fragments from our common altar are sent out as messengers of love and peace, bearing glad tidings to all people,

confident that the *whole* will be found acceptable, and will become the humble means, under God, of leading very many to a knowledge of the truth, and of producing a far better understanding of Universalism in the public mind. And we shall be highly pleased if this collection leads the reader to a spiritual view of the "twelve pearly gates," and to behold the "twelve angels," and the "twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem," and to that tree of life, bearing "twelve manner of fruits," whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

The book has not been prepared to gain a literary reputation, but rather as a work of love. While it contains some of the best "gems" and thought of our literature, it also contains those that are necessary to complete the whole, and make it useful and instructive to all classes of readers.

Nearly every title to the sections in the book has been given by the writers. Here we have what has been written — not what our denominational age, experience, and present culture might dictate. It is well, we trust, that these gems are woven together, that the ages to come may learn the thought of our first century.

The following letter, from a dear friend of my youth, will show that this work was nearly completed more than a year ago, but it has been providentially deferred; and *now* it becomes very appropriate for this period of our history, — setting forth our denominational thought with that clearness which cannot be misunderstood, and for which we should constantly labor, that we may lead others into the truth, and rejoice in the great salvation.

But to the letter: —

"PHILADELPHIA, PENN., July 16, 1869.

"Rev. N. C. HODGDON: *My dear Sir:* — I am glad to learn that you have nearly completed the compilation of your book, and have no doubt you judge rightly in supposing that such a work will be acceptable to our people, and useful to those, not of our faith, who are disposed to read and examine for themselves. I shall certainly be gratified to peruse it and to know

that you have been rewarded for the labor it must have cost you.

"Our acquaintance reaches back more than a quarter of a century, and the extraordinary civilities I have received from you have been a source of pleasure in the recollection which cannot easily be effaced. If any words of mine can be of service to you, they are at your command, as a small token of the gratitude I have ever felt for your efforts in behalf of our religious principles, while yet a layman. Time has not obliterated from my mind the zeal and faithfulness you manifested in old Epping, when a mere youth. (1837-38.)

"What blessed hours we then enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!"

In all my wanderings I have not forgotten that green spot in my pathway, nor the dear friends with whom we walked to the house of God in company. But how many of them have gone home! How many have left the trials and sorrows of earth for the joys of that better land, where tears shall be wiped from off all faces, and the happiness of God's children shall be consummated! But, thank God, we do not look upon the departed as lost, only '*gone before*,' and that they now stand ready with open arms to welcome us to the golden courts of heaven. Is it not, my brother, a little strange that a hope like this, which is so much in accordance with all the better feelings of our natures, for the truth of which every good man prays, and in behalf of which Christ himself died, should meet with so much opposition? If there be anything more grand or cheering than this faith of ours, it has *never been read to me in history, sung to me in poetry, nor whispered by angels in my sweetest dreams!* And yet there are those who cry out, as in the ancient times, 'Bad doctrine,' 'Crucify him, crucify him!' It is not, however, well to be angry with such people. We would not, if we could, call down fire from heaven to consume them. Calumny and detraction are sparks which, if we do not blow them, will go out of themselves. The surest remedy against the charge of 'bad doctrine' is, to live it down by *perseverance in well-doing*. This is a shield which we may hold up against all our enemies.

"Your book, as I understand it, is to be a compilation of *beautiful extracts* from our writers.

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever."

You might cite these words from the Psalmist: 'How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!' 'Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise; be thankful

unto him and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *I will fear no evil*; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.' You will likewise readily call to mind the following from Isaiah: 'How *beautiful* upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth.' 'He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it.' 'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.' The beautiful words of Jesus may likewise be referred to: 'Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not *much better* than they?' 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.'

"And then again what language more beautiful or expressive than the words of Paul:—

"'Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For of him, and *through* him, and *to* HIM, are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.'

"You might easily fill every page of your book with quotations similar to these, but I presume it is your intention to cite mostly from modern writers, and will not therefore trespass on your time further. *Let your light shine*, and believe me to be yours, with all manner of good wishes,

"JAMES SHRIGLEY."

The humble offering now goes forth with the author's hope and prayer that the Great Head of the Church will continue to shed his light upon us.

May the Father's blessings rest down upon us, and upon the cause which this volume so fully represents in the year of our Lord 1870, and the year *one hundred* of Universalism in the United States of America, as publicly recognized.

VERNON, Vt., Dec., 1870.

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At the close of each selection, the figure corresponds with that given in the Index. For instance, wherever the figure (1) occurs, it will be seen that the Rev. Dr. T. J. Sawyer is the author, and so on through the book. Credit has been given to periodicals only in a few instances. Wherever the letter (C) occurs, the remarks are by the compiler.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following selections are very appropriate for our INTRODUCTION : —

“ Our past is glorious, our present crowded with the most important privileges and the grandest opportunities ever presented to any people, and our future gives promise of an influence and power which, if we are now faithful, it is impossible for us to over-estimate.

“ A hundred years, enriched by the labors of self-sacrificing and consecrated men, on whose work God has approvingly smiled, have not only secured us a place and power as a recognized branch of the Church of Christ, but have also witnessed such a spreading influence of the great truth peculiar to our faith, that no Christian sect now exists in our land, whose dogmas it has not changed or modified. Poetry receives its noblest inspiration from the prospect of the glorious future assured by Universalism; civil government attests its wide-felt power in every claim and demand put forth by liberty and protection, based on the manhood of our race; philanthropy finds here alone its incitement, hopes, and consolation; moral science demonstrates its worth in its theories of obligation, conscience, justice, and benevolence, and in all which it presents as the highest motive to moral action; while the more subtle philosophies, and discoveries of natural science, whether taught in popular story or in labored treatise, demand the ‘perfected har-

mony of the universe,' as the only satisfactory solution of the problems of life, and the possibilities of Almighty Wisdom and Love.

"Such results having been already obtained, the duties of the present are enjoined by every consideration of gratitude for the past, of advantages to be secured at once, and of the possibilities before us. And it is believed that the desire already manifest for more efficient organization, the growing interest in church fellowship, the pervading zeal for greater consecration to God and Christ, and the teachings of the Holy Spirit, and the generosity which has characterized so many recent donations for parish, educational, and relief interests of our church, are indications that the Universalists of America will not be appealed to in vain. . . .

"The new century on which we are to enter is to witness an advance of the nation in all that is highest and noblest in political achievement, — a result never before possible to American civilization, because cursed with the barbarism of human slavery. It will also, as the signs of the times clearly indicate, witness, as its religious characteristic, the supremacy of that church whose doctrines give the most unmistakable support to its advanced civilization. All harsh and partial theologies will surely be outgrown and repudiated, and whatever puts contempt on human nature here, or intimates its hopeless ruin hereafter, will be spurned with righteous indignation. The American church of the future, based on the divinity of Jesus Christ and his religion, firm in its conviction of the truth of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, and accepting all the logical results of these for its theory of retribution and of destiny, must, whatever name it may choose to be called by, rely, for its organized effort, on those who are already faithful to these Christian doctrines.

"Universalists of America! For you the closing century has prepared this glorious privilege of the future! Put forth the energy and zeal of well-assured faith, and of consecrated life,

and the results at which we aim will be provided for and secured!" (108)

"From these considerations may be drawn some practical conclusions appropriate to our first centenary year. We should keep in view, in the first place, the significance of the fact that we are, in the order of Providence, a separate people. We should maintain this separation. We should hold fast to the principle that our work can be done only by Universalists, — by a peculiar order of minds, and only according to methods adapted to such minds. While we may do many things in co-operation with other organizations, there is a work devolving upon us which we alone can do. And we can do it only by methods in consonance with the great movement of liberal thought in which our system had its beginning. We shall fail if we suffer our energies to be dissipated by our unreal union with the representatives of rationalism, or if we relapse into orthodox and semi-orthodox modes of thought and feeling. Universalism is neither to be made as rationalistic as possible, nor as orthodox as possible, but as Universalist as possible. It is not Radicalism nor is it Puritanism; and any attempt to make it adopt the methods and tendencies of either will bring its work to an end. It is Christianity with its broadest, freest, most liberal interpretation; Christianity without dogmatism, without chains on the soul, without a ban upon the reason, or an inquisition threatening the conscience; Christianity with its God the Father, and man the brother; with its spiritual inspirations, its grand hopes, and its all-embracing love.

"Again; it is needful for us to remember, as we enter upon our second century, that we owe much to our compact and vigorous organization. In the future, as in the past, the preservation of this will be one of the essential conditions on which will depend the fulfilment of our mission. Yet we should not forget that our organization had its origin in a movement in the interest of freedom of conscience; in the interest of the rights of reason against the denial of reason; in the interest of pure protestantism against unprotestant intolerance and petty perse-

cution. It is needful, then, that we be on our guard, lest the zeal of organization betray us into taking an attitude that shall be false to those early inspirations, to those first motives, to those primary principles of our system. Let no petty inquisition, no puritanic intolerance, create division, jealousies, and strife. Let our glorious confession of faith be the standard by which we try the temper and the spirit of all; let loyalty to Christ unite us all; and let the note of liberty, which was sounded over the cradle of Universalism, ring out in every centenary anthem with its clarion peal of encouragement or warning.

“Finally, let us remember that there has been given us a doctrine of the grandest spiritual inspirations, and of a quickening power for the regeneration of mankind. Let us open our hearts to these inspirations. Let us present the heavenward side of our faith to men. Not in the pride of reason let us go forth to conquer the world, but in the power of great spiritual truths; not trusting in science, but in the divine forces of love. And let us work. The mission of Universalism is implied in its great name, and is nothing less than the regeneration of the world. Let our souls be kindled by the inspiration of this thought; and as we now stand near the early morning of our second century, with all the promise of its great day before us, let us give ourselves to this cause in consecration to God and loyalty to his Christ; let us do our utmost, each in his place, and then hand over the work to others, with the full faith that the grand procession of the centuries will speedily bring the earthly consummation of Universalism in the era when ‘the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ.’” (148)

A DENOMINATIONAL OFFERING
FROM
THE LITERATURE OF UNIVERSALISM.



PART I.

UNIVERSALISM DEFINED.

UNIVERSALISM AS AN IDEA.

THE following selections will give the reader a true **IDEA** of our doctrine, as defined by our ablest writers, and the compiler would remark, that, while we have been *distinct* in all of our utterances, we have been no less so in *defining* Universalism. Let not the repetition of the same general ideas upon any topic deter the reader from a careful perusal of the whole; for it is only in this way that one can become familiar with our denominational thought, and our varied expressions upon the same subject. So long as this is the character of our work, it cannot be avoided; nor would we have it otherwise, since here we find the beauty, the glory, and the strength of our living, burning thoughts, which are every day growing more popular in the minds of all intelligent people, whether in our own country, or in other lands, where the light of the Gospel has shed its

beams of gladness. Surely, "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." (c)

The following selection we take from the "Universalist Quarterly," for April, 1870. And this able periodical represents, "1. An Idea; and, 2. A body of Christians to whom that Idea is specially significant, and whose hopes and Christian labors are inspired by it. That Idea is, in brief, the universal, unchangeable, illimitable love of Almighty God. We call it Universalism. We accept it in all its legitimate developments. We would not resist any logical deduction from it. We recognize in God the Father of every intelligent soul. We hold that every divine ordinance which affects his moral creation originated in infinite love, not only for mankind in general, but for men, women, and children in particular. The divine government, we believe, seeks not 'the greatest good of the greatest number;' but the greatest good of all and of each. In this it excels in beneficence the best of human governments. There can be no such thing as endless, remediless evil, if God is wise and almighty. The time must come when every prodigal shall return to the Father's home, every alienated soul be reconciled to the divine will, every intelligent spirit be purified and perfected. To this end, all the resources of the divine mind, we may well suppose, will be applied. The purpose of infinite love cannot comprehend any consummation less sublime than universal holiness. To this consummation tend, as we conceive, all human experiences, all divine providences, all individual and social development, the afflictions and pains which man innocently suffers, the retributions which his transgressions bring upon him, and especially the mediation of the man Christ Jesus, through the record of his Gospel, and the

inspiration of those who have believed on him. It is through these various ministries that we confidently expect the fulfilment of our hope. And we have seen no reason on science, or moral, or logical grounds, to hesitate in the boldest utterance of our conviction, that the moral creation 'shall be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God.' " (26)

WHAT IS UNIVERSALISM ?

"In order to understand the subject, it should be observed that the word Universalism is used in *two* senses: *first*, as the name of a single distinctive doctrine; and, *secondly*, as the common appellation of a whole system of faith. These different uses of the word must be kept in mind, in order to avoid misapprehensions into which the learned sometimes carelessly fall. I will endeavor to make it clear, under the *first* sense.

"*First*. Universalism, in its simple and proper theological sense, is the doctrine of *Universal Salvation*; or, in other words, of the *final holiness and happiness of all mankind*, to be effected by the grace of God, through the ministry of his Son Jesus Christ. This is well known to be no novel doctrine in the world. It is as old as Christianity itself, and has been believed and taught by some of the most learned men in the Christian church, and in almost every period of her history. It is remarked by DODERLIEN, that the more distinguished for learning any one was in Christian antiquity, the more he cherished and defended the hope that punishment would ultimately come to an end. And OLSHAUSEN, another learned German, says, that 'Universalism is, without doubt, deeply rooted in noble minds;

it is an expression of the longing for perfected harmony in the universe.'

"Believed, as Universalism has been, and still is, by men so widely separated by space and time, men of almost every variety of creed in the church, and of schools in philosophy, we cannot expect to find an agreement among them, except on this and a few connected doctrines. Such a thing would, in the very nature of the case, be impossible. In ancient times, there were orthodox and heretics alike, who believed in the final salvation of all men; and in modern times, we find members of almost every Christian communion, Greek, Romish, Lutheran, Church of England, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Unitarian, Friends, etc., differing widely in many respects; but all agreeing in this one divine truth, — that God loves all men, and will have them all to be saved; and that Christ gave himself a ransom for all, and that all will ultimately be brought to holiness and heaven. When, therefore, it is said, that an individual, of either ancient or modern times, and especially beyond the limits of the United States, was a Universalist, it is by no means to be inferred that he adopted the system of faith now generally maintained by the Universalist denomination in this country." ⁽¹⁾

"As respects the one central idea, in which all who have ever professed to believe the doctrine, have agreed. This great and paramount idea embraces the final end of all sin in the human family, and the consequent holiness and happiness of all men. We deem it proper to consider all who embrace this one item of faith as Universalists, however they may differ in regard to the ways and means which have been, or may be, used to carry into effect the desired and glorious result; or however they may differ as to the

times and seasons in which divine wisdom may accomplish it. This item of faith evidently distinguishes all its advocates from all who believe that any of the human family will sin and suffer as long as the Creator shall exist." (2)

"By Universalism, we mean the doctrine of the final holiness and happiness of all mankind. We have little real sympathy with any writer who uses the broad word Universalism in any exclusive sense, or to signify any particular class of believers. . . . We use the word Universalist, in the same sense in which it has always been used in this country, since JOHN MURRAY landed on the shores of New Jersey, namely, to signify a person who believes in the eventual holiness and happiness of all the human race, whatever may have been his opinion on minor topics." (3)

. . . "The name, therefore, may be properly applied to all persons of whatever church or name, who believe in this great leading doctrine, the final blessedness of all men in Christ. This is no *new* doctrine, as is sometimes alleged. The denomination called Universalists is of recent date; the church is a modern church; but the doctrine is *old*, and has been held, by some minds, in almost every age and branch of the Christian church. There were no Lutherans before Luther, no Methodists before Wesley. But these bodies of believers maintain that their principles are old; and, indeed, identical with Christianity itself. This is our claim. We devoutly believe that the faith we hold was taught by Paul and John and Christ; and that it is founded in the Scriptures given by inspiration of God. . . . The term Universalism, in this view, denotes final and universal salvation, and whoever believes in that blessed consummation, we claim as Universalists." (4)

"Universalism is not a confused collection of doctrinal

fragments without continuity or relation of parts; but a system of divinity, a tree of life rooted in the character and perfections of Deity, and growing up naturally into trunk and branches, putting forth leaves and buds and blossoms, and finally producing the ripe fruit of a Christian life. . . . In God are united all possible perfections; and by the necessity of his nature he is infinite in all his attributes, and unchangeable,—the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He is the source of all our blessings, the inexhaustible fountain of good to man in this world, and in all worlds, in time and in eternity. This is essentially the theology of Universalism.” ⁽⁵⁾

“Universalism, it may be well to define summarily, is the doctrine of the infinite and universal love of God, carried to its legitimate results. It affirms that God is the Father of the human race,—is blessing, and will evermore bless, each one of his children; that his graciousness is manifested to each, in joyous, or grievous, or mixed form, as is best for him, and will finally work out his salvation from all unholiness; that he has provided an agent, by whom he will accomplish that purpose; and that, at last, the sinful, unbelieving, condemned world, will be brought unto a pure, sinless, holy heaven. This faith is the only doctrine of divine love consistent with the nature of the human soul, and with that of the Divine Spirit. The ‘carnal mind,’ which is at enmity with God, abhors it; the ‘spiritual mind’ delights in it. Faith, hope, and love, reverence, holy aspiration, and reason, when freed from the perversities and weight of the lower nature, confide in, and long for, its fruition. And it is impossible, in the nature of things, for any other theory of ‘the last things;’ of the consummation of God’s purpose, of the ‘dispensation of the

fulness of times,' to be the truth of God, who is Love, and who made the human soul in his own image." (6)

UNIVERSALISM IN ITS SIMPLEST FORM.

"Universalism, as it is now well defined, at least by its votaries, embraces a faith in *one* God, who has made a special revelation of his nature, character, and purposes; in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which revelation he has established and confirmed by miraculous displays of his divine power, and, consequently, an *unequivocal* faith in the divine authenticity and authority of those Scriptures in all matters of faith and practice, and in Jesus Christ, as the only personal Mediator between God and man, being the true and perfect moral image of the Father, possessing 'all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' an embodiment and complete exhibition of all the divine perfections, so that he that seeth the Son seeth the Father; that the Father has made him the mediate administrator of the divine government, having 'put all things under his feet,' and 'given him all power in heaven and in earth' for the express purpose that he should 'reconcile all things to God,' and save the world.

"Thus far, Universalists perfectly agree. . . They have considered the great doctrine of the Final Restitution of *all things*, as paramount to all others, and as the great fundamental theme of pulpit labors; and they could thereon meet heart, hand, and soul, and with all the feelings of Christian love, bid each other God speed." (7)

"Universalism, then, in its plainest and simplest form, — in the form in which it is universally received, and most certainly believed by all Universalists, — is nothing more

and nothing less than this clear, rational, and scriptural sentiment, that God is the Father of all spirits, that the chief end, and the end sure to be attained, for which he created any spirit in his own image and likeness, is that it might 'glorify God and enjoy him forever;' that in accordance with that purpose and his own parental affection, he sent Jesus to be the Saviour of the world, 'gave all things into his hands, and gave him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him;' that Jesus, in accomplishing his mission, 'tasted death for every man,' became 'the head of every man,' and 'will draw all men unto him,' until he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, having 'put down all rule, and all authority and power,' and delivered up the kingdom of universal spiritual empire unto God the Father, 'that God may be all in all!'

"If a still simpler form of words is wanted, Universalism is the doctrine of the *salvation from sin*, and consequent suffering of every moral being in the universe of God, and its consequent and complete blessedness and holiness in an immortal existence, by the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ. And in this great, important, and distinctive sentiment, all Universalists are agreed, as they are agreed in receiving the Bible as the revelation of God's will and purpose, and a guide in faith and practice." ⁽⁸⁾

UNIVERSALISM IN A CREED.

The only denominational creed ever adopted by the Universalists is the following "*Profession of Belief*."

"1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments contain a revelation of the character

of God, and of the duty, interest, and final destination of mankind.

“ 2. We believe there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ ; by one Holy Spirit of grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

“ 3. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected ; and that believers ought to maintain order and practise good works, for these things are good and profitable unto men.”

A writer, in 1835, made these remarks on the above : “ This concise and luminous profession of faith was adopted by the General Convention of Universalists of the New England States, at Winchester, N. H., in 1803, and it comprehends the outlines of the whole theory of Universalism, properly so called, in ‘ words fitly chosen, like apples of gold in pictures of silver.’ It is not so minutely expressed as to hinder a cordial fellowship among those who may differ in opinions in regard to some nice and unessential points of doctrine. This may be viewed as a favorable circumstance, since it is just as visionary to expect a considerable number of free and inquiring minds to agree in every particular of belief, as it would be to expect an equal number of men to resemble each other exactly in every shade of complexion, figure of body, and habit of life.” ⁽⁹⁾

“ The doctrine of the final salvation of the world is important even as a single tenet ; and if it stood alone, it would afford abundant material for the creation of a *new* sect. The question involved is of vital interest to every soul, and ought never to be kept back, or equivocally presented. . . We believe in distinctive preaching. We would have the doctrine of the final salvation of the world

clearly presented ; but we would not have it so repeatedly and prominently argued as to stand in the popular mind for the whole of Universalism. No mere dogma, as such, can possibly contain it. In the universal application of its principles, and the spirituality of its means, Christianity is adapted to all people in every age and condition. If Universalism comprehends its essential elements, it is more than a sect or party. It is the true catholic faith. It is impossible for that to be a mere dogma which is strictly *Universal-ism*." ⁽¹⁰⁾

"Great injustice is done us as a denomination, by the statement, frequently made, that Universalists believe all men will be saved, whether they become regenerated or not. It ought to be understood that Universalism embraces no such idea. We believe only holy hearts will enter heaven. But we also believe that all men will finally enter there. It follows, logically then, that we believe all will be made holy. And this is just what we believe. It is the distinguishing feature of our faith. We know that God has *infinite* resources at his command, and we do not believe that he cares less for the human soul when disembodied, than he did before it left its clay tenement. So that we unhesitatingly affirm that the grace of God will somewhere, and at some time, prepare every soul for the service of the upper sanctuary ; in other words, will subdue all things unto himself, by bringing all souls into harmony with himself, thus making all men holy and happy." ⁽¹¹⁾

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL UNIVERSALISM.

"Universalism, — what is it? What does it propose? To what does it tend? These are questions of importance,

especially to all those who are desirous of being satisfied in their own minds, by the exercise of their own reason, as to the truth or falsity of any system claiming to be the truth of God. Universalism *in theory* is the idea of an all-perfect God, who created the universe for the display of his glory, and the good of all he created. It is the idea of a Mediator between God and man, — Jesus Christ, — who, in his doctrine and character, exhibited both the perfection of God and the perfection of man. It is the idea of the Holy Spirit of truth, which is sent forth to all the world, and, when followed, guides men into all moral truth. Or, as the apostle has it: ‘There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, — the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.’ This is Universalism in theory. IN PRACTICE, Universalism is the loving of God supremely, as our Father, and the doing to all men in all things as we would they should do unto us. It proposes to make all who believe its doctrine, and carry that doctrine out in practice, just what the honor and highest happiness of man require. It presents for human consideration truths and purposes in regard to the character and will of God, concerning the objects and certain result of the divine government, to which all moral beings are amenable, which are at once cheering and purifying, as it proposes to bring all intelligences into a state of holiness and happiness in the kingdom of immortality. And hence its tendency is to induce supreme love to God, as the divine originator of that wonderful plan of grace manifested and exemplified in his Son, and which, while it admits of a just retribution to every sinner, according to his works, at the same time contemplates the final destruction of all sin, and the salvation of all sinners. This, and nothing short of

this, is according to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. This, and nothing short of this, meets and satisfies the desires begotten in the soul by the Holy Spirit." (28)

NEGATIVE UNIVERSALISM.

"In order to answer this question, 'Why am I a Universalist?' understandingly, we inquire first, What is Universalism; or what is it to believe in Universalism?

"1. What is Universalism? It is not the idea, that any or all are to be saved from divine justice, or from the just consequences of their sins while they continue sinners and unholy; but it is belief in an infinitely wise and good God, the Father of all spirits, who has done, and is doing, and will ever continue to do, all that infinite love can prompt, — all that infinite wisdom can devise, — all that infinite power can execute, — to save every soul from sin, and train all to holiness, without doing any violence to human freedom. Men are now, and ever will be, free to do as they will or choose within the sphere of moral accountability; but God changes dispositions and wills by the influence of his Spirit.

"Universalism does not teach that any can or will be saved without faith, without repentance or reformation of heart and life. It teaches the conversion and regeneration of all souls in the fulness of times.

"It is not, and never has been, the idea of Universalists generally, that all sin, unholiness, and punishment are confined to this life; but simply, the idea that, finally, the last prodigal son or daughter will return to the Father's house, and the last lost sheep to the fold, so that, finally, there will be but 'one fold and one Shepherd.'

“Universalism is not the idea that sinners are to be, or can be, saved without complying with conditions or without the use of means; but simply that the salvation of the world is to be the result of a great missionary enterprise under God himself. And the problem is, with the liberty given to men and the circumstances with which he has surrounded them, can he regenerate, purify, and restore all souls to righteousness?

“1. Affirmatively, we argue this result, from the fact that God is the Creator and Father of all moral intelligences. If he is the Father of all, he will save all if he can.

“2. God is the Infinite Mind, and consequently possesses more intellectual and moral power than all his creatures in the aggregate.

“3. God is perfect in knowledge and wisdom.

“4. He has already converted, regenerated, and saved some of the most ignorant and hardened unbelievers, and the most wicked sinners of earth. If he has done this, He is able, with sufficient means and time at his disposal, to convert, regenerate, and sanctify all souls.” ⁽¹³⁾

NOT THE WHOLE OF UNIVERSALISM.

“The distinguishing feature of Universalism, that indeed which gives the system its name, is the doctrine of the final salvation of the whole human family. This single doctrine, however, does not constitute the system of faith which is known under the name of Universalism. It is the result of a system which embraces all the means, methods, and agencies by which that glorious end is achieved.” ⁽¹⁴⁾

“It is an unworthy conception, and an injurious error, to define Universalism as consisting in the naked and

isolated opinion that all men will, some time or other, and somehow or other, be saved. This does not define a religious system of principles. It is no *principle* at all. It is but the *result* of principles. True, it is a distinguishing fact in regard to the system of principles which constitute Universalism, and that they shall legitimately work out this grand result; but it is those principles themselves that constitute Christian Universalism.

“By Universalism, as a subject of religious faith, we mean the great system of truth divine comprising places and arrangements, means, motives and ends, principles and operations, by and through which the wisdom, and love, and power of the Deity act in the government of the world, and by and through which the subjects of his moral government must act that they may become a perfect society. The primary principle, that which is pre-eminently emphasized in this great moral system, embracing the Divine Sovereign and his loyal subjects, is the operative principle of communicative goodness, working downward from the stronger to the weaker, from the superior to the inferior. This communicative operation of the principle of beneficence commences with the Head of all, the Infinite Father. . . . This practical principle of communicative goodness, working from the higher to the lower, in acts of beneficence, is peculiar to Universalism as a theological system. ⁽¹⁵⁾

FAITH IN UNIVERSALISM EXPRESSED.

“The longer we live, the stronger grows our faith in the great doctrine of a world’s salvation. The more we see and meditate on the works and ways and providences of

God, the more fully are we convinced of the perfect, illimitable, endless, and changeless benevolence of our Father in heaven; and of the utter impossibility of his ever dooming any of his offspring to interminable torments. His benevolence is written, as with sunbeams, upon all creation. The heavens above, the earth beneath, the world around and within us, the worlds of mind and of matter, the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral kingdoms; the adaptation of means to ends, — means all-efficient, and ends all-benevolent; the order of Divine Providence, by which seeming evil is seen to result in good, light to shine forth out of darkness, joy to spring up from the bed of sorrow, by which the harsh and terrific mutterings of thunder, and the livid lightning's crash, are made to purify the very air we breathe, and make it salubrious both to vegetable and animal life; the ten thousand sources of enjoyment and of profit in what we are wont to deem evil, — all, all combine to declare that 'the Lord is good unto all, and his tender mercy over all his works.' . . .

"All good men and good beings in the universe desire and pray for the salvation of all men; they all pray for the suppression of vice and misery, and for the universal prevalence of holiness and happiness. Well, from whence springs this desire? — from God, or the devil? from good, or from evil? Is it a good, or a bad desire? All will answer: It is a good desire, and doubtless springs from God. Well, reader, will God inspire his creatures with *more benevolent* desires towards HIS offspring than he feels himself? Are we more benevolent, or better than God?

"Again, will God inspire desires and prayers in his children in *opposition* to his own will and purposes? Or will he inspire in them desires and prayers which he deter-

mines never to grant? *Impossible*. For we are required to pray for all men, — and to pray in faith, too, nothing doubting, — for the very reason that this accords with the will of God, ‘who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’

“Do you wonder, then, that we are firm believers in Universalism? That our faith grows every day we live, and firmer every year that rolls over us? Would you not wonder if we could be anything else but Universalists, with such evidences before us? Great as is the number of Universalists now, and rapidly as they are increasing, we sometimes wonder, when we think of the evidences of our faith, that our numbers are not still greater, and that they do not increase more rapidly. But God’s time is the best time to convince the world; and our faith is firm that, in his good time, nations shall be born in a day. Let us, then, one and all, trust in him, believe his word, and *live* the faith we profess.” ⁽¹⁶⁾

THE NAME UNIVERSALISM.

“There is no name in the world like the name Universalism. It is high, and embodies the sublimest hope of eternity. In those good old days when we preached the doctrine, we did not deal much in religious filigree, but in plain terms. There is nothing so spiritual as Universalism; it embodies all that is beautiful in theory, excellent in doctrine, and in purity of life and heart; and it is doing its great work to-day.” ⁽¹⁷⁾

“Our name is a good one. It was wisely chosen at the baptism of our denomination. A better I cannot conceive. It has a common centre, — *UNITY*, — and a positive declara-

tion ; one God and Father of all ; one Lord, the Saviour of all ; one brotherhood, one fold. It has a boundless circumference ; it accepts all truth ; embraces all goodness ; rewards all virtue ; punishes all vice ; saves and blesses all men. It overcomes all evil ; corrects all error ; removes all wrong ; reconciles all hearts to God. It is universal. It cannot be confined or restrained to become narrow, selfish, sectarian, without perverting and destroying its meaning and intent. I love it ; I admire it ; I praise it ; it is so like God in all his works ; so like Jesus in the Gospel ; so like the spirit of truth and power of love everywhere. I was ordained to preach it, to honor it, to defend it from all personal pride, and party prejudice ; working under it for the conversion of sinners, the joy of hearts, the salvation of men. To me it is the synonym of all that is true and pure and good and holy and beautiful and lovely and noble and glorious in God, in man, and in all the world. It comprehends all perfection, is all light, life, love, and immortality. It banishes to eternal oblivion whatever is opposed to God and human happiness ; all wrath, enmity, hatred, variance, everything impure, false, hateful, all sin, sorrows, suffering, death, and corruption. It fills the soul with all love, peace, good-will, joy, and attunes the heart to the praise of God. It embraces the faith of Jesus, and works the work of God. Beautiful, harmonious, significant word, — UNIVERSALISM ! May it always live in its spirit, be honored in its true meaning, and never be disgraced by any who accept it, so long as names shall be needed to distinguish principles and ideas, — the faith, hope, and characters of mortal men ! ” ⁽¹⁸⁾

“ Some seem to think the name Universalist improper, and seem to be ashamed to own, or confess, the doctrine

that has the designation of Universalism. I propose to show, in this article, that it is a good name, a glorious, heavenly name, a name which no man ought to be ashamed of, but which all may be proud to own. The name and the doctrine which it designates are all drawn from God's word, which teaches, —

"1. That God is the Universal Father. Matt. vi. 9.

"2. That God is the Universal Saviour. 1 Tim. iv. 10.

"3. That Jesus, as the Son and Sent of God, is instrumentally the Universal Saviour. 1 John iv. 24.

"4. That God's *will* is for Universal Salvation. 1 Tim. ii. 4.

"5. That God's *grace* brings Universal Salvation. Titus ii. 11.

"6. That there shall be a Universal Ingathering of human intelligences unto Christ. Eph. i. 9, 10.

"7. That there shall be a Universal Deliverance from sin and suffering. Rom. viii. 23.

"8. That there shall come a period of Universal Righteousness. Rom. v.; Isa. xiv.

"9. That Universal Reconciliation shall ultimately be effected by Jesus Christ. Col. i. 20.

"10. That there shall ultimately come a period of Universal Praise to God, and confession to God's glory. Rev. v. 13; Phil. ii. 9-11.

"11. That there shall be a Universal Blessing of all nations, kindreds, and families in Christ. Gen. xxii.; Acts iii.

"12. That there shall be a Universal Resurrection to the condition of the angels of God in heaven. 1 Cor. xv.; Matt. xxii.; Luke xx.

"Now, let me ask, should not these sentiments be called

Universalism? And should not those who hold them be called *Universalists*? Oh! it is a glorious name,—a name full of meaning—embracing UNIVERSAL GOOD! So, then, when anybody speaks of my religious faith, let him call it UNIVERSALISM; and when anybody speaks of me, in reference to my religious sentiment, let him call me UNIVERSALIST!” (29)

“What’s in a name? There may be much in it. And I wish to say a word with reference to the name which stands at the head of this writing. The beauty and force of this name are seldom understood; and but few persons seem aware of the proud claim which it justly puts forth to entire harmony with the great doctrine of the Gospel of Christ. I touch here upon no trifling matter; and I wish to take no undue advantage of the sound of a word. But as Hebrew names in the olden time were significant of some fact, so the name of a religious denomination may be the expression of a bright prophecy.

“Let us look, then, for a moment at the names of some of the principal sects into which the Church of Christ has been divided through the darkness and the corruption of ages. Roman Catholic is a contradiction in terms,—for a church that is Roman cannot be catholic or universal. This very word shows the relation of the sect to a particular dynasty on earth,—to the ecclesiastical rule which men have set up in a certain city, in the vain hope of making that city, throughout all generations, the mistress of the world. Protestant Episcopal merely indicates the protest of certain persons against the errors and abominations of the older establishment. And when the Romish Church shall utterly fall, as fall it must, there will be no meaning in the term Protestant, for there will be nothing left to pro-

test against. This name, therefore, with all its high pretensions, is but local and temporary in its signification, and of course must soon pass away. Presbyterian is a word relating to a particular form of church government, and in the great matter of Christian doctrine means precisely nothing. And the same may be said of Congregational, which suggests nothing of hope or comfort to the soul of man. Baptist has reference to the use of water in administering a certain rite of the church, and as applied to a sect is a word of remarkably narrow and trifling signification,—quite too small to be made the theme of earnest discussion among sensible men. Methodist, a term applied to certain defenders of the Romish Church in the seventeenth century, who attempted to bring to a close the controversy with Protestants by new methods of reasoning, afterwards came to designate a modern sect, who claimed to be particularly methodical in observing the rules of religion, and in the regularity of their lives,—though I have never been able to perceive any remarkable order among the people bearing this name, unless it be on the principle that there may be method in madness. But they are greatly improving, and they ought to be encouraged; so that I would carefully avoid saying an unkind word of them. This term, I need hardly say, gives no intimation of hope or confidence to the world. And Unitarian signifies the simple belief of oneness in the Godhead. This belief indicates nothing to excite either hope or fear in the human breast, and may be held by persons widely differing in their views of subjects involving the deepest and the highest interests of humanity. And indeed persons bearing this name hold all manner of belief, while some of them seem to glory in holding nothing that deserves to be con-

sidered Christian belief of any kind. But the very name Universalism is a prophecy of good. It is free from all specific meanings, all limitations and partialities, and embraces at once, in the promises of God and in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, all the nations, all the families, and all the kindreds of the earth !

“ Creeds and sects have their work to do in the world, and may all be serviceable in their proper time and place. But the true religion of Christ, rising above them all, as the mountain established in the top of the mountains, will endure beyond all the agitations of party strife, and give shelter and repose to every weary child of humanity. There is an adaptedness in Christianity to the wants of all men ; and it needs but to be seen in its broad and beneficent spirit, to secure the belief of every mind and the love of every heart. And we rejoice at this day that there is an increasing disinclination in the minds of men to be hampered by narrow creeds, and to seek for the prosperity of religion in the mere triumph of a party. All party names may cease to be known, and certainly all party spirit will die, when all nations shall flow unto the mountain of the Lord's house, and the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ ! ” (46)

“ I feel a deep interest in our denominational name, as well as doctrines. . . I confess that the name sounds better than any other name. I love it, because I owe my allegiance to it. Whatever I have attained has been as a Universalist minister. I might go back forty years, and, had I the making of the name, I could not suggest one that would suit me better. I was born under it, and I expect to die in full allegiance to the Universalist faith. I understand what it means. . . . I like to see a man

true to his country, to his home, and true to the interests of that which has made his religious faith." (37)

THE FOUNDATION OF UNIVERSALISM.

"*God is love.*" These three words contain the sublimest truth ever revealed to man; a truth which is the foundation of Universalism; a truth which man's wisdom can never set aside; a truth which is as a pledge of immortal bliss to the intelligent creation. In harmony with this short and emphatic declaration must be all the divine attributes, all the relations the Supreme bears towards mankind, all the dealings of his power, wisdom, and justice towards the subjects of his government, and all the teachings of the inspired revelation. There is no room in the universe for an argument against the declaration of these words, and upon these we build the glory of Universalism. But what is Universalism?

"Universalism is a system of faith drawn from the Holy Scriptures. It recognizes the existence and perfection of one living and true God; his righteous, and benevolent, and universal government, his unlimited care and kindness over the creatures of his power. It recognizes Jesus Christ as the Son and Sent of God, as the delegated Saviour of the world; his precepts as the rule of life, and his doctrine as the hope and comfort of man. It recognizes the accountability of man to God, the heinousness of sin, the intimate connection of holiness with happiness, and sin with misery. It recognizes the mortality of mankind, the resurrection universal from the dead, and the final holiness and happiness of every intelligent being, through the unbought grace of God." (38)

“We are *Universalists*. There is nothing narrow in that name. It means universal *truth*, as well as universal *salvation*. Its arms are long enough, and its bosom is capacious enough, to embrace everything that is useful to man in this world and in the world to come. We do claim that we are seekers after truth; and every truth that has been, or may be, discovered, in science, philosophy, or religion, is ours by virtue of our all-embracing name. The man of science, turning his telescope towards heaven, may read new records among the stars; digging down into the earth, he may trace the footprints of Jehovah on the fossil remains of buried epochs; walking amid the wonders of the floral kingdom, he may acquaint himself more and more with the beautiful ‘thoughts of the Creator,’ and, returning with his revelations, he may awe and inspire a waiting world. He is only *our servant*, doing our work, and bringing treasures to augment our stores. The philosopher, tracing his way amid the labyrinths of thought, and finding out the subtle laws of matter or of mind, illustrates more and more the length and breadth, the depth and height, of our all-embracing name. The philanthropist and statesman, laboring to correct our social abuses, and remove our political ills, are our forerunners,—John the Baptists sent before to prepare the way. And when, on all the towers of science and religion, the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and the conflicting interests and dogmas of sects and creeds shall all be harmonized, and ‘the lion and the lamb shall lie down together,’ and the prayer of the Master is fulfilled, ‘that they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee,’ this millennium church, the ‘broad church,’ the ‘church of the future,’ the ‘one fold’ beneath the watchful care of ‘one Shepherd,’ will

only fulfil the prophecy and realize the ideal of our denominational name." (100)

"There is a doctrine in the Christian world denominated Universalism. It teaches that 'God is the Father of the spirit of all flesh;' that all men are brethren, bound to love one another as God has loved and ever will love them all; that obedience to the divine law is the highest heaven of the soul here or hereafter, and transgression of it the surest hell; that it is the purpose of the Universal Parent, through Jesus Christ, his Son, to bring all men to a saving conformity with the requirements of this law; and consequently into a state of redemption, from 'this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.' This is a great doctrine. It is one of the most important affirmations that man can hear. It involves the highest interests of the race. It personally concerns every mortal. If it should seem to be proven an error, the conceptions respecting God and man which it involves are certainly worth examining and weighing well, because we do not see any doctrine that can reach beyond them. If it be true, then, surely, every good heart must rejoice, and all men, as they seriously contemplate the truth, be led to see more of its inexpressible worth to mortals now, and to immortals evermore.

"What a beautiful word is Universalism, and how full of holy meaning it is! We understand by it the dominion of God over all; his boundless and unfailing love; his will to make all his children know and serve him, and his power to carry that will into effect. We understand by it the great brotherhood of mankind; that men belong not only to God, but to each other as brothers and helpers. . . . We understand by it that men have not only a common

interest in the present life ; but a common inheritance of immortality hereafter. We understand by it that the spirit of love is the holiest spirit, the service of love the holiest service, and the peace of a loving spirit above all other enjoyment that mortals can know ; that God is to be served, not in slavish fear, but in filial love, for ‘ that perfect love casteth out fear.’ This is Universalism. Remember it, reader ; think of it often. When you hear others speak lightly or contemptuously of this name, think what it means ; and when you would be wise and good, think how this word instructs you ; and when you think of what the world wants, remember what can supply its wants, and make heaven here below.” (21)

OLD-FASHIONED UNIVERSALISM.

“ Concerning our denomination I have a right to speak, having been engaged for more than thirty years — in 1852 — in its ministrations, and wedded with its interests. Let me say, then, distinctly, I have no desire to see our denomination shorn of its distinctive features, its denominational peculiarities. I love old-fashioned Universalism.” (22)

“ We have recently — in 1856 — seen the inquiry, What is meant by old-fashioned Universalism? We suppose it belongs to the doctors of divinity to answer ; but as they seem to disagree in these days about as much as doctors of medicine, and as we have frequently used the term ourself, ay, more, and pride ourselves upon being an old-fashioned Universalist, we have concluded not to wait for them or others, but to inform those who would know what we mean when we use the blessed and to us significant term.

“ To us it implies that Universalism, which, in itself, by

itself, of itself, without the aid of any other *ism* or extraneous doctrine, satisfies the wants of the divinity within us. It is that which never swerves from the golden rules given us by its great Master, the Redeemer. It leans neither to the right nor the left, sways backward nor forward, but plants itself on the Rock of Ages, and looks *heavenward*. It does not say to one, 'Join us, and you may believe so and thus, and do this or that;' and to a second, 'Become one of us, and your faith may be this, that, and the other, and your deeds such as your conscience authorizes;' but it offers to all a 'Thus saith the Lord;' it tells all, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments.'

"It is not a narrow faith, for it embraces the uttermost parts of the earth; it is not a selfish faith, for it cries, 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?' it is not a cheerless one; for it says, 'I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you;' it is not indefinite, for it expressly tells us, 'Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know;' it is not cold, for it bids its believers 'Love one another, even as I have loved you;' it is not *illiberal*, for it will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth; it says distinctly, 'All nations and families and kindreds of the earth shall be blessed;' it will swallow up death in victory, and wipe away tears from off all faces.

"This is old-fashioned Universalism, as we understand it; broad, for it has the universe for a platform; social, for it calls all men brothers; cheerful, for it ever has a bow set in the heavens; definite, because it has always a yea and nay; warm, for it palpitates with a Saviour's heart; liberal, because it encircles every child of God. 'Our Father in heaven' is its author, Christ its exemplar,

the Bible its creed. Glorious faith! Well might the angels, who heralded its advent, sing, 'Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people.'"²⁰

UNIVERSALISM DESTINED TO TRIUMPH.

"Universalism is not a doctrine which teaches that man shall be saved from punishment. . . In regard to the extent and duration of punishment there is a difference of opinion among us, as there is on other points among other sects, who yet maintain the same general views. . . .

"It is sufficient, for the present occasion, to say that all Universalists believe in complete punishment for sin, and, therefore, Universalism is not a doctrine which teaches that man may do evil with impunity; but it is a doctrine which teaches that all mankind will finally be saved from sin and consequent misery. This is an important sentence in our discourse, for it is a position of which our opponents seem not generally aware.

"Be it remembered that we do not enter the arena of discussion to argue against punishment, — against *future* punishment, — but against the endless duration of sin and misery. We do not believe that evil is ultimate in the government of God. . . We do not believe, then, that punishment is vindictive, but that it is corrective, emendatory. . . Universalism teaches that every man shall be adequately punished for his sins. How, then, can our doctrine be immoral in its tendency? . . It is destined to finally triumph, for 'the goodness of God leadeth to repentance.'

"A few words more to the Christian and philanthropist

of whatever name or sect. If you cannot believe with us, we think you will, at least, acknowledge that our view is the most thrilling and glorious of which the human mind can conceive. Think of it, brother! It comprehends in the embrace of mercy every human soul!—not darkened and debased, nor polluted with sin; but purified and perfected, holy and happy. Tell me, in your broadest scheme, what nobler end can you propose than universal good? You cannot have more! Would you stop short of this? Oh, say, if it may be so, have you one objection? Will you not fervently rejoice, and shout the triumph also? Look at it! look at it! From a small fountain, a boundless sea! From strains which quiver over angel harps, anthems of praises, rising higher and higher, pealing from rank after rank of the white-robed host of the whole family of man! Armies of those who have been down in the shadow and in the gloom, coming up and shouting upon the hills of heaven! light breaking from one point, and flowing wider and wider, and yet wider, until the vast universe is flooded with glory; and from those whose islands and altars are now in twilight or in darkness, goes up the morning song of joy and redemption, like the mingled voices of many waters!" (24)

"We believe that Universalism rests upon the most profound analysis of the mind of man, and harmonizes with his best hopes and desires. All good men wish it were true, even when compelled by their theology to disbelieve it. The most accurate survey of the motives of human conduct, the most comprehensive view of history, and the most correct appreciation of the tendencies of society, — all bear testimony to its truth. The moral operations of our time are strong by its power; nor is it too much to say,

that the coming of God's kingdom upon earth must be the result of its general application.

“Thus is it in all things. In all theories of science or philosophy, the *false* evaporates and leaves only the *true*. The eternal work is proceeding, which eventually arranges the shifting elements of things, and places everything in its true position. And what does this irresistible tendency teach us? *That only the good is enduring. That the false has no principle of life within itself, and is therefore transitory. That the time draws near when Error shall shrink away from God's moral universe, before the silent gaze of Truth.* This wondrous power of separation resides not in time, but in the action of the all-pervading Spirit. God has made truth strong and error weak, and ever is his voice pronouncing the fiat of separation. So shall the *true* at last triumph through his almighty power.” (28)

“We, as Universalists, believe that our views will, at length, supersede all others, and that *all* will know the truth, from the least to the greatest. But why do we believe this? We answer:—

“1. Truth must triumph. ‘Every plant,’ says Jesus, ‘which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.’ Only truth can stand forever. ‘The eternal years of God are hers.’ Hence, Universalism as the truth of God, will move on, conquering and to conquer, until the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of our faith.

“2. The word of God is pledged to its triumph. ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days,’ says Isaiah, ‘that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people

shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.'

"3. All people pray for our faith; and if prayer is availing, it must, at last, be the faith of all. Seldom do we hear men pray for the endless misery of the sinner. The soul revolts from such a prayer. Hence even the staunchest opponents of Universalism pray for its success, whenever they offer a true Gospel prayer. And a faith which is prayed for must triumph at last.

"4. Ours is the only faith that meets the wants and satisfies the desires of the human soul; and, as such, it must be successful at last. Very few persons believe in endless misery for themselves or their friends, and when the creed is lost sight of, the instincts of the soul are always in favor of Universalism. As Paul says: 'The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach.'

"5. Ours is the only faith which is honorable to God; the only faith which is based upon love,—immutable LOVE,—broad as the universe, and reaching to all; and love will triumph over all that is opposed to it, for God is love.

"Why should we not, then, cherish our faith? Why should we hesitate to avow ourselves Universalists? Let us be true to our convictions; true to conscience, and true to God." (3)

PART II.

HISTORICAL UNIVERSALISM.

THE ORIGIN OF UNIVERSALISM.

THE same course will be pursued, in this part of our labors, that was adopted in Part I., namely, the gathering up of a few fragments from what has been published in relation to the history of our doctrine, both in the United States and in other countries. And what is here presented will show the *origin* of our views, so far as fragments can do it. They are the facts in the case, and worthy of the deepest consideration, because they present the growth of the most important doctrinal movement the world has ever known.

Having seen what Universalism is, — the desire of all hearts, when under the influence of the Christian spirit, — the reader must feel anxious to learn more of its *origin*.

It will be seen by these pages that our views are not *new* in the world's history, nor powerless for good in the community. They are doing their great work in the world, and will keep pace with the advancement of light and knowledge. We are still growing, — growing in the esteem of others, — from the blade to the ripe corn in the ear, — from a *small* stream to a *mighty* river, — the river of our God. (c)

“ Notwithstanding the present extent of Universalism, it

was small in its beginning in the world ; also small in its beginning in this land. In its history it very strikingly resembles a stream of water. In following a stream of water, we start with the rivulet, flowing, it may be, from a small spring in some far-off mountain desert. We follow it a short distance, and we find it joined by another rivulet. And then a little further on we find another coming tumbling down the mountain-side, hurrying on to its destination. And then another, and still another, in like manner, come tumbling down as tributaries to the main stream. And so the stream rolls on, and as it rolls on, it turns the mill that grinds the corn ; then it bears along the light canoe ; then boats of larger size ; then great ships with their white sails, bearing the commerce of nations, are borne on towards the ocean. So, in tracing the history of Universalism, we start with a single promise, — the first that was given to man. That promise is the small spring in the far-off desert. From this spring there flows a stream so small that it is with some difficulty that we are able to trace all its winding. But as we follow on we find tributaries flowing in and swelling the main stream. They come from the promises made to the patriarchs ; from the predictions of the prophets, and from the shadows and types of a typical dispensation. And then, following on some distance, we behold a mighty swelling of the stream in the advent of the Saviour, the song of the angels, and the preaching of the apostles. Now we find ourselves sailing on a deep and broad river, borne on by the winds of truth and love, — fresh breezes from the flowery hills of heaven. But, as obstructions are sometimes placed in the way of streams, and as muddy waters sometimes flow in, so, also, was it with our glorious faith. It was opposed by open enemies

and corrupted by professed friends. For five hundred years the muddy waters of error and false doctrines were flowing in, and the pure waters were being hedged up by mountain difficulties. And, finally, the church reached the climax of corruption, and Universalism was condemned by a general council, and its friends, living and dead, were anathematized. This was done by the Fifth General Council, at Constantinople, in the year 553. Then followed the dark ages, and they followed as the result of the action of the church in receiving errors and rejecting the truth. During the dark ages Universalism was but little known; for it is a religion that wants light, and not darkness. But as streams of water will finally break over, or bear away, all obstructions, and roll on towards the ocean, so the pure waters of salvation began, in the Reformation of the sixteenth century, to bear away the obstructions placed before them, and to purify themselves from the muddy waters of error and false doctrines. And from that day to this, opposition has been giving way before the pressure of divine truth, and the muddy waters of error, which, to very many, has turned life unto a cruel bitterness, have been drying up, and the channels in which they once flowed are being filled with the sweet waters of salvation. And as these waters roll on, we hear rising, from plain and mountain-top, the song of the ancient jubilee, made more sweet and full, as blessings multiply: 'Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.' " (123)

" 'How is it,' said an inquirer to me, not long since, 'that your doctrine, if true, should have remained so long in obscurity? I understand that as a system, in its present form, it was not widely preached, or believed, until within

about fifty years.' The question is a proper one to be asked, and not a difficult one to answer. And though Universalism has from the beginning had its advocates, and those among the luminaries of the church, we are content to answer the question as it is put. The reply to it will lead us to consider some of the great features of God's method as Ruler of the world. Hence we meet at the same time many questions of the same nature, and asked with other views. The infidel asks of the believer in Christianity, 'How is it, if your religion be of God, that it advances so slowly, and is even sometimes defied, if not overpowered, by adverse influences, and powerful organized sins?'

"The reformer is met by the same question in essence, though in a different form: 'How is it that your notions have just come to light? Are you wiser than your fathers, or, peradventure, than Jesus and his apostles? You are fanatical; and your conscience is diseased and over-nice.'

"Doubtful Christians stumble over the same difficulty in another form, and groan over the 'loss of interest,' or the inroads of error, and seem to fear that the world is going backward, or that error has stolen the sceptre from the sleepy hands of truth. Our views touch all these difficulties, and they furnish in part our reasons for discussing this question in the present form. For, let me observe, I do not by any means feel under obligation to answer such a question to any of the religious systems around us; for none of them are old enough to have any right to ask it. They are all comparatively modern. Look at Judaism, hoary with an age of three thousand years. To this day, at the proper time, the Jewish father gathers his children around him, and recites the escape of their forefathers,

brought out of Egypt by the mighty hand of God, thirty-three centuries ago.

“To this day, with staves in their hands, and sandals on their feet, they partake of the Passover, — a sacrament of freedom, in memorial of the overthrow of the oppressor, and the deliverance of the oppressed. After fifteen hundred years, Judaism saw Christianity rise as a rival system, assuming to take away its dominion, and to bring in a new and better way. Judaism might well put the question to Christianity, and it *did put it*. ‘We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not whence he is,’ said the ancient order to the recent innovation. And inasmuch as Christianity neither denied that Judaism was of God, nor that God was perfect and all-wise, the question was pertinent to the Christian, ‘If your religion is true, why has it not appeared before?’ ‘Do you pretend that God gave the imperfect system, and delayed the perfect until this late time?’ might the hard-featured scribe ask of the zealous Christian.

“Catholicism usurped the place of Christianity, and, after sixteen hundred years of the history of the church had been fulfilled, Protestantism appeared, and was resisted as an innovation. The Catholic still asks the question of Calvinist, Arminian, and Baptist, ‘Where was your religion before the Reformation?’ to receive perhaps the retorted question, ‘Where was your face before you washed it?’ So that, if antiquity is the test of truth, no one of the religious orders around us can show such a claim to it as to entitle it to question the pedigree of others. Moreover, we do not find that what is ancient is always the best; for if it were so, ancient and venerable error would be better than a modern and fresh-discovered truth.” (127)

IS UNIVERSALISM A NEW DOCTRINE?

"It is sometimes asserted by our opponents that Universalism is a *new* doctrine, having been preached in America less than a hundred years; and then perhaps the same opponent will say, in the next breath, that it is an *old* doctrine, and was first preached by the serpent in the garden of Eden! It is evident that *both* of these assertions cannot be *true*; it is equally evident to our own mind that both are *false*.

"But let us *examine* the objection for a moment. If Universalism is true, why was it not preached in America before the days of Murray? Now, if there is any force in the objection, it is equally good against all religious sects, even against Christianity itself. If Christianity is true, why was it not introduced into the world before it was? The Baptists have existed as a sect about three hundred and forty years. Suppose we should approach a preacher of this communion, and say, 'Sir, if your doctrine is true, why was it not preached before?' Would he regard the objection of any force? Not in the least; and yet he turns and urges it against Universalism, and calls it unanswerable.

"The Methodist Episcopal Church has been in existence not more than one hundred and fifty years. Suppose we should approach a divine of this church, and say, 'Sir, if your doctrine is true, why was it not preached before?' Would he not laugh at our folly in stating such an objection? Most certainly. And yet he urges the same objection against us, and calls it an argument.

"The first Presbyterian Church in America was organ-

ized in Philadelphia, about the year 1700. If its doctrines are true, why not preached before? The argument is as good against one church as another. The objection, however, is without any force. A sentiment is not true, because it is *ancient*, neither is a doctrine false, because it is *new*.

“While we admit that truth is progressive, and that new light bursts upon the mind, we by no means admit that Universalism is a *new* doctrine. It has been cherished by good men in the church in all ages. It was boldly proclaimed by Christ and his apostles, and by the prophets of old. The doctrine is as old as the purpose of God; for ‘He hath purposed in himself, to gather together in one, all things in Christ.’ Eph. i. 10. It is as old as the *will* of God; for ‘he will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth.’ God hath spoken of the restitution of all things ever since the world began. Hence Universalism is not a *new* doctrine, as is frequently asserted by its opponents; but as *old* as the will and purpose and pleasure of the Almighty.” ⁽⁵⁸⁾

ANCIENT AND MODERN UNIVERSALISM.

“The history of Universalism is divided into the ancient and modern. That doctrine had been defended by some of the most eminent of the Christian fathers. It was not regarded as a heresy in the church until nearly four hundred years after the death of Christ, nor was it formally condemned by the highest ecclesiastical authority until the meeting of the Fifth General Council, A. D., 553. During the dark ages we catch occasional glimpses of it amid the general gloom; but at the Reformation it began to glow

again, and from that time has shined with a steady, increasing light. The 'Ancient History' treats of the progress of the doctrine from the days of the apostles, to the Reformation; the 'Modern' from that epoch onward to our time." (9)

"The attentive reader will discover, as he proceeds, that the 'Ancient History of Universalism' is naturally distinguished, by certain peculiarities, into *three* successive periods: the **FIRST**, extending to the year 190, and embraced in the first two chapters, affords but few indisputable traces either of that doctrine or of its opposite; the **SECOND**, running through the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters, to the year 390, or 394, is distinguished by the prevalence both of Universalism and of the doctrine of endless misery, without producing the least disturbance or uneasiness in the church; the **THIRD**, reaching to the Fifth General Council, in A. D., 553, is marked with continual censures, frequent commotions, and some disgraceful quarrels on the subject. In the Appendix the plan is very different, since a regular and connected history of Universalism, from the Fifth General Council to the Reformation, is, with me, utterly impracticable. Here, therefore, nothing but a sketch is attempted, pointing out those traces of the doctrine which I have happened to discover in the course of reading." (20)

"About the year 1824, Mr. Ballou began the study of the 'Christian Fathers' with the intention of preparing his 'Ancient History of Universalism.' This history, which was published in 1829, traces the doctrine from the time of the apostles to its condemnation in the Fifth General Council, A. D., 553. The book also contains an Appendix, which brings the history of our views down to the era of the Reformation. Four years of earnest, persistent study were

given to this book; and it will always remain a standard work among Universalists. It shows that the religion which we hold dates back to the early Christian times, and that it comes down to us one stream of unbroken history, lost from sight only in the turbid sea of the middle ages, and reappearing in the new centuries of moral freedom, to flow on an increasing tide, augmented by fresh tributaries, and bearing upon its bosom the most precious freights of human hopes." (72)

The above-named histories are referred to in the 9th Annual Report before the U. S. Convention, extracts from which here follow:—

"It is now—1844—ten years since the organization of the Universalist Historical Society; and though less has been accomplished through its instrumentality than all of us could have wished, yet it is believed that more has been done than any of us had reason to hope. The utility of a society like this, no one, I feel confident, can hereafter doubt. Its objects are such as cannot but commend themselves to every intelligent Universalist in the country. They are briefly set forth in our constitution,—‘to collect and preserve facts pertaining to the history and condition of Universalism, together with books and papers relating to the same subject.’

"At the time this society was instituted, the history of Universalism had but just begun to attract the attention of the denomination. The ‘Ancient History of Universalism,’ by REV. DR. H. BALLOU, 2d, was published in 1828, and the ‘Modern History,’ by REV. DR. T. WHITTEMORE, in 1830. To these brethren undoubtedly belongs the honor of having first excited an interest in the history of our *distinctive* doctrine. Of their labors it is difficult to speak

in terms of too high praise. Their volumes are certainly works of rare merit. For patient industry and research, for extent and accuracy of information, for general interest and value, they stand among the best works that have issued from the Universalist press in this country.

“Finally, I think we have occasion to congratulate ourselves on the measure of success which has thus far attended our efforts to promote the knowledge and prosperity of the truth. Confident of the divine blessing upon every enterprise honestly undertaken, and prosecuted in the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to promote the glory of God, or the happiness of his creatures, let us, my brethren, redouble our endeavors to further the interests of this society, and with it the knowledge of the truth as it is in Him who gave himself a ransom for all. There is little in the history of Universalism during the eighteen centuries through which it has held its course in the world, to make a Christian blush. It has stood through good report and through evil report, and though oftentimes opposed by the arm of rude power, its true believers have always enjoyed the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and have seldom failed to show, that, like their divine Master, they preferred to suffer persecution rather than persecute. ⁽¹⁾

THE HISTORY OF UNIVERSALISM.

“‘What is the history of Universalism,’ asks a friend, ‘that I should care for it?’ It may not be generally known (though it ought to be) that the history of this element in society, especially in the more recent times, involves one of the most important elements, if not the most

important element, that pertains to man's civilization. The fortunes and misfortunes of those who have been prominent in its advocacy and defence are of a marked and singularly interesting phase in human destiny. The deadly hatred of the world to them and their views, and the mischief this hate has instigated its possessors to inflict upon all of this way, from Christ down to our time, all conspire to enlist our sympathies and interests in whatever relates to the whole subject, either of the doctrine, or of those who are set for its defence. Especially since the days of Murray and Ballou, and their coadjutors, does this thing assume great interest and value to many. The reformation of Luther and others of the sixteenth century, great as it was, falls far below that of this in the nineteenth, and this will be fully conceded before the opening of the twentieth of our era; because theirs, in a good degree, was external, — an outside work, — requiring more force of the will than of the intellect and heart, and its heroism (so often and well applauded) was of a correspondent nature; not so much of the soul as of the passions, its warfare was more with things than ideas, — with institutions rather than fundamental principles.

“When, therefore, I say Ballou will stand higher in the world's esteem than Luther ever has done or can, I simply speak the common sentiment of the twentieth century. He, too, will be the greater hero, for like his Master, Christ, he never once faltered, or thought to fall back on any merely civil power, or once sought it to aid him on, or to extricate him from troubles and difficulties thrown in his way by his adversaries; yet he had plenty of these, — far more than the whole train of the sixteenth-century reformers. His courage came from an unbounded and

unshaken reliance upon God and his truth, as he conceived it. I do not say this of Ballou alone; it is shared by thousands who have counted all things as loss, etc., for the excellency of Christ. Rome fought desperately for her dominion; but can we say less of limitarians? In comparison, it seems to me, the antagonisms we and our fathers have encountered are far greater than were instituted against Protestantism three hundred years ago. We have stood against Rome and all her offshoots. The endless-torture sentiment *has*, and now to some extent *does*, exhibit as perfect a specimen of fiendishness as the history of man affords. Another thing, too,—our fathers in this cause had to contend single-handed and alone, while in the old Reformation, at the outset, arose up multitudes; kings and princes were in it; education from the start was for it. Not so with us. The entire machinery of society stood in hostile array against it; church and state, pulpit and press, all fought as against a common enemy; and as the apparent determination on their part seemed to be the utter extinguishment of the sentiment, every avenue to the public ear and heart was closed, or aimed to be closed, against those who dared to proclaim the final and complete salvation.

“I would say a word for the history of Universalism to those who need to know what it is. It is all and more than above indicated. To be sure, it is not a history of wars that cut and kill, break and bruise the bodies of men; it is a war of ideas,—principles that lie near the heart of society’s truer life. It is a genuine REFORM, striking at the very root of all evil passions and propensities,—correcting the evils of society, and individual at the fountain, where spring motives to action.” (21)

UNIVERSALISM—NOT A NEW DOCTRINE.

“The proposition that Universalism is not a *new*, but a very *old*, doctrine may sound strange in the ears of some persons, as they have ever been accustomed to regard it and to hear it represented as a modern invention altogether, which was first imposed on the world a few years ago by an old man ‘down-east.’ Indeed, it is often, nay, commonly, used as an argument against its truth, that it is a new thing, and a departure from the faith of ages. Why, it is said, when all other arguments have failed, this is a new thing; it sprung up only a few years ago; it cannot be true. Now, to give this very common objection all the force it can have, admit that Universalism is a new doctrine,—what does it prove? Is not every form in which the different sects of Christians represent religion a departure from the faith of ages? Has there not been a time when the doctrine of every denomination has been a new thing?—and shall we conclude from that fact alone, that they are all false? If this be so, Luther was altogether wrong in coming out from the corruptions of the Roman church and proclaiming the doctrines of the Reformation. Indeed, if this principle be admitted, there is no truth in any religion,—a conclusion too sweeping even for those who so often use it as an argument against Universalism.

“But after all that has been said about new things, what has self-styled orthodoxy to boast of in this respect? To hear its believers talk, one would think that the doctrines they profess have been in existence thousands of years. But what saith history on this subject? If we ex-

cept the Greek and Roman churches, all existing Christian denominations are of comparatively recent origin, having mostly arisen since the era of the Reformation. . . . The argument proves nothing, and only shows the weakness of that cause which resorts to its use.

“But I have said that Universalism is not a new doctrine. A few facts in proof of this position will now be offered. So far, indeed, from being a *new doctrine*, we believe that it was taught as long ago as the time when Adam and Eve dwelt in the garden of Eden,—not, as some foolhardy proselytes have asserted, by the serpent, but by God himself. When God said to the man and woman, ‘In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,’ he declared the *certainty* of punishment for transgression,—and that is Universalism. When he said, ‘The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head,’ he promised the coming of Christ, ‘who shall destroy the devil and his works;’ and that, too, is Universalism. The same promise of a universal blessing in Christ was made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, ‘that in them and their seed, all the nations, and families, and kindreds of the earth shall be blessed.’ And thus on, down through the Old Testament, we find Universalism clearly and explicitly taught; but we do not meet there even a single intimation of the doctrine of endless woe, the chief corner-stone of modern orthodoxy. But when we come to the New Testament, the truth of Universalism is taught in the most unequivocal and strongest declarations of the Son of God and his apostles. . . .

“But leaving the Bible, the great text-book of Universalism, and turning to the history of the church, we find, as early as the year of Christ 150, broad and marked traces

of *Universal Salvation*. In the several subsequent ages of the church, every ecclesiastical historian knows that this heavenly doctrine was openly and boldly proclaimed by very many of the fathers, many of whom were the brightest ornaments of the Christian profession, in learning, talents, and piety. . . .

“Besides this, it is a fact that Universalism was never called in question during the first two centuries of the Christian era. It seems to have excited no disaffections, to have provoked no controversies, to have called forth no censures, during the first two and a half centuries.

“Certainly, ‘Universalism is no new thing.’ It is but the revival of the ancient, the *true* Christianity.” (32)

FACTS ABOUT UNIVERSALISM.

We wish to note a few more facts about the doctrine of Universalism. This doctrine of the final salvation of all souls was not condemned by any Christian writer until the year 394; during that year a quarrel broke out between the celebrated Origen (a Universalist), and his opponents, who found fault with him, because he believed the devil would finally be saved; but they did not at first object to the final salvation of all men. Some of the Christian councils afterwards expressed the same opinions. (c)

“In the year 553 a Christian Council at Constantinople condemned Universalism, but it still continued to be held and maintained in the church, until popery was established. In what have been called the dark ages, Universalism did not flourish. It never does flourish where there is ignorance, and moral darkness, and superstition. . . .

"We pass the apostolic age, and come to the time when the idea of the salvation of all souls was made prominent in the controversies of the church with its adversaries, and what age was this? Was it a time of great ignorance, superstition, and licentiousness? No; it was the age of Clement of Alexandria, and of Origen. It was a noble and enlightened age.

• • • • •
"And pursue the history of Universalism, and what do you see? You see it leaving the world in an age of darkness, or rather the light shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. But when the Reformation opened the mind of man to broader views, and the art of printing furnished the means of intellectual culture for the privacy of solitary meditation and research, Universalism again assumes a prominency, and arrests the attention of bigotry and power. And with the spread of moral and intellectual light, this interpretation of the Gospel has gone — like a thing that courts the day. And *now* where is Universalism? It is almost omnipresent with real intelligence in Christendom, modifying theology even while the defenders of that theology repudiate any alliance with it, but denounce it as the most abhorrent heresy. It is most prominent in the most intellectual portions of Christendom; in Germany, England, and the United States." (20)

"Universalism as a doctrine, compared with all other *isms*, is far the *oldest* of them all. It was an undisputed doctrine in the primitive Christian church for the first three hundred years. Traces of this doctrine are found in the writings of the earliest Christian fathers. By 'Orthodoxy' we mean Calvinistic Congregationalism. And in point of fact — *historical fact* — Universalism was a favorite

doctrine of the best men and earliest fathers in the church, hundreds and hundreds of years before Orthodoxy had its birth. Let not the Orthodox again — because it is not becoming in them to do so — taunt the Universalists as if their doctrine was — not old enough to be true. It is just as old as Christianity, to-day.” ⁽³⁴⁾

“Universalism was advocated by some of the ablest and best men in the ranks of the Christian ministry, through the fourth and fifth centuries, as, indeed, through all the periods of the Christian history. . . . The doctrine was not condemned until the middle of the sixth century. And no well-read person in church history can have failed to see that, after this doctrine was condemned, the church began to decline, and gradually continued to do so, until the dark ages closed in upon her. Since the Reformation the doctrine has been growing in favor with the best portion of society, and it is growing stronger every year; for it is the light that is in the world.” ⁽³⁵⁾

“Near the close of the second century the doctrine of the restitution was held by Clemens Alexandrinus, the principal or head of the famous *catechetical school* of Alexandria. He was the most distinguished and influential Christian of his time. And as principal of that school, — the most eminent Christian seminary in the world, — he must have been esteemed as one of the most learned and truly orthodox men in the great community of Christians. From the position which he held; from the influence which it must have been certain and obvious that he would exercise over the opinions and principles of his pupils, — it is fair and even necessary to infer, that his opinions were those of the *collective church*. . . . The inference seems unavoidable, then, that the church was at that time

a Universalist church. . . That church must have known his views ; it must have approved of them ; it must have believed them, or it would not, could not, have approved ; and, if it believed them, it was a Universalist church.

“And that this conclusion is fully warranted, appears from the further fact, that some of the most distinguished cotemporaries of Origen were not only personal friends, but great admirers, of his writings. We seldom admire the doctrinal productions of a man whose opinions are repugnant to our own convictions. Particular considerations may induce us to read his works ; but very important reasons must exist for the suppression of our dislike of what we esteem error. The friends of Origen must have been extremely courteous, if Universalism were not more popular than in our times, to yield him and his works their countenance and support, if they were not believers in the restitution. I think the world would give me credit for claiming that man as a Universalist, who, being known as an eminent Christian professor, were to publish and patronize, by every laudable means, a work professedly defending and advocating that doctrine, and who at the same time should remain through life the firm and affectionate friend of the author. And such were Alexander, Bishop of Jerusalem, Firmillion, Bishop of Cesarea in Cappadocia, Gregory, called Thaumaturgus, or wonder-worker, and Ambrosius, the ‘convert, friend, and patron’ of Origen. Had these and others, who were admirers of the works of this great man, really not been believers in the restitution, is it possible to suppose that every vestige of their faith should have been suppressed? If none but Universalists had been the depositories of the records of the church, perhaps there are those who would venture to think them

capable of falsifying history for their own purposes. But they have not been the helpers of the symbols of faith. On the contrary, their avowed enemies — the advocates of the doctrine of endless misery — have had the sole disposition of these matters for fourteen centuries. And it is not supposable that they have voluntarily added one solitary testimony of the proofs of ancient Universalism. They have, no doubt, given us the facts as they existed; and we are greatly obliged to them for the favor, since it enables us to prove that most of the principal bishops, learned men, and, therefore, the great body of the laity in the most important cities of the Roman empire, were Universalists, so late as the middle of the third century. . . .

“And that the doctrine of the final restoration of mankind prevailed extensively in the church appears from the extreme efforts, made about the close of the fourth century, for its suppression. Remonstrance and argument were not deemed sufficient; recourse was had to what were, no doubt, supposed to be more certain means of conviction, — a synod for the trial of opinions, and an armed force for the expulsion of the monks from their mountain deserts. It is, at least, probable, that the establishment of the doctrine of the trinity, about this time, had an influence in augmenting, if not creating, the hostility against the Origenists, or Universalists. . . . In the last year of the fourth century, the opinions of Origen were formally condemned by a synod, composed of a few bishops at Alexandria. This is the first condemnation of Universalism, by an ecclesiastical council, on record. It had then existed in the church four centuries. It had been publicly taught and maintained by a very large proportion of the ablest, and by some of the most distinguished, men of the times.” (35)

UNIVERSALISM IN AMERICA.

We notice hereafter, the history of Universalism in Europe, though not in an organized form, but as a prevailing sentiment, and with a fair prospect that it will soon take on an organization, and make itself felt as a moral power in every nation. While it is now fully understood that we date our century from the landing of JOHN MURRAY in this country, it should be borne in mind that there are traces of the doctrine before his arrival.

And we present the following as worthy of a place in these pages, which will be read with interest, in connection with other facts. The history of the *first* preacher, as well as the *first* organizer, should be understood. (c)

“Hence, we remark that the first person by whom the doctrine of Universalism was preached in the United States, so far as we have been able to learn, was Dr. George De Benneville, of Germantown, Penn., though he was not a regular preacher, nor do we know how prominent a point in his discourses he was pleased to make this sentiment. He was born in London, July 26, 1703, of parents who were French refugees, persecuted for their religion. His father had been invited into England by King William, who took a tender care of him, and employed him at his court. His mother was of the Granville family, who died at the time of his birth, and Queen Anna herself provided for him a nurse, and was his kind guardian during his early years. At about the age of twelve, he was sent to the coast of Africa in a vessel of war; but on his return home he was thrown into a melancholy state of mind, which continued for fifteen months, and during

which he thought himself a great sinner, and believed that all the world except himself would be saved. At last he professes to have had a trance, when he saw himself abandoned to justice, from which he was shielded by the interposition of Jesus Christ, who gave him an assurance of salvation. His soul was now filled with ecstasy, and he adored God on all occasions. The ministers of the French Protestant churches in England were very uneasy at what they heard concerning him, and they demanded a confession of his faith; but when they learned that he held the restoration of all souls, they could not own him as a member of their church. Believing that he was called to go into France and preach the gospel, he took passage at Dover for Calais, and, on his arrival, began to proclaim, in the market place, the doctrine of free salvation by Jesus Christ. He was seized by the civil authority, and punished with eight days' imprisonment, being informed that on a second attempt his life would be in danger. This was when he was about seventeen years of age. He was not to be easily prevented from what he thought was the service of God, bidding him to preach the gospel. He went into Normandy, where his ancestors had lived, and found some, even clergymen, who were to associate with him, whose names he has left as follows: Mons. Durant, De la Chevette, Damoulin, L'Achar, etc. They met in valleys and woods, and sometimes crowds gathered to hear them preach. At different times some of their number were seized, of whom several were hanged, others whipped by the hands of the hangman, and branded with a hot iron, and some were sent to the galleys. At length Mr. Benneville was seized, with another young man from Geneva, twenty-four years old, whose name was Durant. After a

month's imprisonment they were condemned to die, — Durant to be hanged, and Benneville to be beheaded. They were conducted together to the place of execution. The former ascended the ladder, sung a psalm, and died joyfully. The latter fell on his knees, praying God to forgive his murderers, and expecting instant death; but, while the executioner was binding his hands, a courier arrived from the King, Louis XV., with a reprieve for the criminal. He was confined at Paris, and at last liberated at the intercession of the queen. After this he went into Germany, and preached among the French refugees, and formed considerable acquaintance among the nobility of Germany and Holland. He continued in these countries about eighteen years, when at last he fell sick, became very low, and at this time had that wonderful trance in which Elhanan Winchester so fully believed, that he published an account of it, against the wish of Dr. Benneville. . . .

“After his recovery he began again to preach, and being once more imprisoned, when set at liberty he resolved to remove to America, supposing himself called thither to preach the gospel. He arrived in 1731, and settled in Berks County, Pennsylvania, where he divided his time in the practice of physic and in the proclamation of the divine word. He soon removed to Germantown, and became a very celebrated physician, as it was not an unusual thing for people to go sixty and seventy miles to obtain his advice. Throughout his life, until prevented by old age, he made it a practice to perform a journey twice every year for the purpose of preaching. He would take no reward for his services, and almost all denominations would invite him to preach in their pulpits. His visits were generally made to the west part of Pennsylvania, Maryland,

and Virginia; and on one occasion he visited some of the Indian tribes, and, finding a number sick, he took some of the chiefs into the woods, and instructed them in the use of certain herbs, the virtues of which they had not known. He died of apoplexy, in March, 1793, aged ninety years." (3)

UNIVERSALISM IN EUROPE.

"In speaking of Universalism in Europe, our readers must not understand us to imply a particular sect organized, there as here, upon the distinctive ground of faith in the salvation of all men; we refer only to a tenet, which, wherever held, is regarded as a part, or article, of Christian doctrine. Except in a few cases, which will be noticed in the proper place, Universalism, as a denomination, is unknown. Those who embrace that belief, on whatever grounds it may be, think no more of making it the subject of a distinctive name, or the boundary line of fellowship, than any other article of faith, — the divine pater-nity, for instance. . . .

"They regard it as a part of the Christian scheme, — the ultimate of the grand scheme of redemption wrought out by Jesus Christ. They preach it as an object of faith and hope, a source of comfort in affliction; and draw from it, in connection with other considerations, motives to obedience in preparing the soul for the state of perfection and bliss. But they never labor to make this particular tenet prominent to the exclusion of others equally as essential. They do not, however, teach it by inference; they make it positive, and adduce direct proofs of its truth; showing, by a fair interpretation of the Scriptures, logical reasoning from the acknowledged attributes of God, and the analo-

gies manifest in all his works, as well as by its peculiar adaptation to the nature and wants of the human soul, that it must be from heaven."

The compiler would here remark, that the time has come when it should be distinctly understood that the doctrine of Universalism in Europe is not *obsolete*; that it is held as a cherished faith, and that the heaven is at work, and will one day become an organized force, — for only in this way can it give the largest hope and the greatest joy to the yearning heart of humanity, and thus set the nations free, in the fullest sense of that term.

The writer continues: "It will be the design of the present article to give a general view of Universalism as he found it in the places he visited during the summer of 1848. It will be impossible to offer anything like statistical information, for there are no data by which a positive calculation can be made. And then it was very difficult to come at all the forms in which the doctrine is held, the method of argumentation, and the kinds of proof by which it is defended. To ascertain anything like positive proof upon these points, it would be necessary to consult each individual, and learn his own opinions and his reasons for them. Where there is utmost freedom of thought, and, especially, where there is not the least sacrifice of favor or affection to be made for the wide difference of opinion, unity of faith cannot be expected, till the same degree of knowledge is attained by all. Such liberty is possessed, but not such knowledge, and therefore a great variety of opinions prevails in all the Protestant countries of Europe. We shall, therefore, insist more on the fact of the existence of Universalism than upon its character and prevalence, though we shall withhold no information we possess upon

these points. Many who embrace have no distinct system of evidence by which they advocate its truth. They have been trained up in the belief of it, or grown into it, as we have into many opinions we cherish, without knowing the precise process by which the mind has been convinced. . . . It may, therefore, be concluded with safety that there are, among all sects, those who cherish the hope of Universalism." (18)

UNIVERSALISM IN GERMANY.

Universalism in Germany, during the past century, did not obtain a very strong hold of the public mind; and yet the seed was sown broadcast, so that during the present century it has been growing more popular, and to-day it is more definitely promulgated. Its history, in brief, has been well presented by the Rev. Dr. Whittemore. If the doctrine of American Universalism was well understood in Germany, there is no doubt but that it would be the prevailing belief,—a *faith* that would in a short time root out many of the corruptions now existing in the church of that nation.

We are thankful that the good seed sown by the apostles, and early fathers has been wafted into every intelligent portion of our globe; and for the blessed assurance, as Christian knowledge advances in the ages to come, all the nations of the earth will embrace this doctrine. (c)

A late writer says:—

"Passing into Germany, we find Universalism, in some form, to be the avowed faith of nearly all the theologians. A book was not long since published there, giving extracts from their writings, and showing how extensively it prevails among the evangelical ministers. It contained forty-

eight of the most honored names of the church of that country, with quotations. As long ago as 1829, Rev. Dr. Dwight, who had spent some time there, said in a book of his travels, that 'the doctrine of the eternity of future punishment was almost universally rejected in that country; and that he had found but one person who believed it, and one other who had doubts on the subject.' All evidence tends to show that it is so now. Rationalist and Orthodox both unite in expressing the belief in the final salvation of all things. I may quote such as Neander, Olshausen, Tholuck, Hagenbach, Hahn, Bengel, Von Muller, De Wette, and others. German thought is too free to rest in any exclusive idea concerning the condition of human souls in the great hereafter." ⁽¹⁰¹⁾

"Thus all along the pathway of human toil and trial has shone the light of hope. In England, in Germany, in Holland, in France, in Scotland, its genial rays were welcomed. Many a heart, else overburdened, was lifted up into the confident enjoyment of divine love. Surely, my friends, with such a historic background, we need not blush to honor the man who, like a morning star, rose a century ago upon the darkness of American theology, and to-day blends his light with that of the fully risen sun.

"Let it be borne in mind that these defenders of the faith, scattered all along the ages, have generally been public men, many of them preachers, most of them authors, some of them distinguished civilians and men of high social rank. Every one of them had his immediate circle of influence, and, with many of them, that circle was a large one. The conclusion is, that the number of believers in the doctrine of the great salvation, at various times, and especially in the aggregate, must have been immense.

And yet there was no attempt to organize under its banner; no banding of believers in a separate church; no great landmarks of its progress were reared; no institutions embodied its transcendent hopes. To the eye of the casual observer, England, Scotland, France, Holland, Switzerland, Germany even, would present an almost dead-level of unbelieving conformity. As a consequence, the attention of the non-reading world would be but slightly arrested, while the brilliant discoveries of truth would rise like bubbles upon the crest of the wave, break, and disappear forever. The distinctive glory of the last century lies in the correction of this folly; in our rapidly improving organization; in our multiplying institutions of learning and religion, — institutions greatly enhancing our power and promise; and much of that glory belongs to the present generation.” (108)

“One of the most interesting chapters in the history of modern Universalism would be that exhibiting its rise and progress in Germany. Such a history would take us back to a period considerably antecedent to the Reformation, and make us acquainted with some of the sources of the Reformation itself. It would show us Universalism in the very dawn of that great intellectual and moral revolution. It would exhibit Luther himself as holding the doctrine of endless punishment and its accessories, in a manner quite unsatisfactory to the orthodox believer of the present age in this country. The controversies to which the introduction of this better faith gave rise would astonish the reader, both by their frequency and their character, by the number of divines enlisted in them, as well as the learning and zeal of the disputants engaged.

“Though not preached in Germany as we think it our

duty to preach it here, still the doctrine of Universalism is entertained and advocated by many eminent men in that country. Meanwhile, there as here there are a few persons found, who, repelled by the popular doctrine of endless hell-torments, seek relief in the notion that 'the finally impenitent — the incorrigibly wicked' — will be absolutely annihilated, and so, by the destruction of the disturbing element, complete harmony will at last be restored to the universe. Among these is Dr. Hermann Schultz, of Göttingen, who advocates this opinion in a work entitled 'Presuppositions of the Christian Doctrine of Immortality.' In a communication to one of the editors of the annihilation paper, strangely called 'The Restitution,' we find some interesting passages, which we cannot withhold from our readers. Dr. Schultz says, if we rightly apprehend a passage, which seems open to ambiguity, that the new Lutheran party would willingly adopt the annihilation doctrine, but has no hold upon the heart of the people, and can, therefore, do little for its promotion.

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"Dr. Schultz sees clearly that the popular doctrine of endless torments must be given up, if one would not virtually deny the doctrine of Christ in reference to the character of God. Are not thoughtful divines of all sects, in this country as well as in Europe, being pressed more and more with this conviction?

"Dr. Schultz acknowledges that Universalism has not only been defended by noteworthy theologians in Germany, but that it also, 'as an object of Christian hope and longing, has much that is inviting, and many apparent Scripture proofs.' Is it not a little remarkable that, in a universe created and governed by a God of infinite truth, a great lie

should be 'an object of Christian hope and longing'? How are we to account for the fact that it has in it so much that is inviting? Certainly no one can say this of either the doctrine of endless punishment or of absolute annihilation. They are objects of no Christian hope or longing. They possess nothing that could be inviting to any human soul. Many good but weak people think them the more credible because they are so abhorrent. Universalism, they say, is 'too good to be true;' and such are their conceptions of God and his government that they think the doctrine of endless torment or of annihilation just good enough to be true, — not good enough to answer the desires and longings of *their* hearts, but good enough to fulfil the purposes and *love* of *Christ* and *God*!

"Dr. Schultz strangely enough finds a manifest contradiction to the doctrine of Universalism 'in the idea of freedom and personality.' This is the last objection to this doctrine we have met with. In America, orthodox divines regard this freedom and personality as furnishing a potent argument in favor of Universalism; hence they plainly deny its existence beyond the grave. Entering the future life, the wicked, they tell us, cannot cease to be wicked, but must go on through all eternity in the evil course which they here began! Give man freedom and personality under a moral government such as we know that of God to be here, and Universalism becomes the unavoidable result. This has been shown in a very satisfactory manner by Bockshammer in his admirable treatise of the 'Freedom of the Will.' Indeed, we know of no advocate of endless punishment who maintains that doctrine, otherwise than by an avowed or tacit denial of moral freedom here or hereafter." ⁽¹⁾

UNIVERSALISM IN HOLLAND

“ We watch with great interest the progress of Universalism in all parts of the world ; and it is evident, from the intelligence which reaches us from abroad, that the great struggle which is going on in Europe is a struggle for intellectual as well as for physical enfranchisement ; for the deliverance of the people from the bondage of superstition into ‘ the glorious liberty of the children of God.’ It is well known that, in Germany, the tendencies towards Universalism have, for years, been decided. The German mind is profoundly metaphysical. It despises shams, and demands a solid foundation for faith. If it has, in some cases, been bewildered by the fogs of a mis-called Rationalism, it has, in others, been blessed by the light of a genuine spiritualism. As Reville says, in his ‘ *Essais de Critique Religieuse*,’ — and never was a truer remark made by man, — ‘ While religious science is becoming less *orthodox*, it is becoming more *religious*. Modern discoveries are utterly hostile to the ideas of the Trinity, Original Sin, and Verbal Inspiration. Reason has, in theology as in all other sciences, a supreme claim. And the substance of all is, that the man of to-day, who unites religious wants with scientific progress, must lose, in Humanity, Religion, which is its highest life ; in Religion, Christianity, which is its highest revelation ; in Christianity, the Christian Church, which is its historical development ; in the Christian Church, Protestantism, which represents at once its old and its new elements ; and, finally, in Protestantism, the ultra Protestant tendency, which carries on the Reformation, and goes in the advance-guard of religious thought.

"Scholten is, perhaps, the best representative of this phase of thought, and has done more than any living Dutch author to give to it currency. The ground which he takes in his 'Doctrine of the Reformed Church and its Fundamental Principles,' and his 'Comparative History of Philosophy and Religion,' is, that man is born animal, yet brings with him the form of a spiritual development, of which God himself is the ideal. The 'fall' of man is less in history than in inward experience. And immortality is predicted on the fact that man feels called to go beyond his purely organic and physical nature, and reaches up to something higher. Sin, in his view, is 'imperfection in the spiritual life, and, consequently, is real misery, since happiness for every living being can be only the full expansion of its life and the realization of its destiny.' He does not adopt the theory of fatalism, but believes in true liberty, which he regards as consisting in 'complete emancipation from every kind of moral evil.' And this is the *destiny of man*. God created him, not to be damned, but as Bailey, the author of 'Festus,' says, 'to be saved;' or as a greater than he has said: 'God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"*The ultimate deliverance of every soul from the power of sin*, — this is the end of the theory of Scholten. Man will, sooner or later, work out that destiny for which he was made; he will stand complete in the image of God. The old idea of an 'eternal hell' is discarded entirely; and 'on the other hand, experience, which teaches us that the longer we delay in egotism and sensuality, the more difficult it is, to attain to the holy life, must be reckoned among the motives which lead men to avail themselves of the divine

dispensations of which history is the theatre and Christ the centre.' " (54)

UNIVERSALISM IN SCOTLAND.

The modern historian of Universalism says, "that the first public advocate of this faith was, probably, JAMES PURVES. This was in 1769, when many believed the doctrine, who did not openly profess it to the world.

"It is often said that the spirit of Universalism is in the moral characteristics of the finest English literature of modern times. Even where the final result which gives name to our faith is not uttered in express words, as it is by the Brontës, by Kingsley, and by Tennyson, it is evident that it is believed, and that it controls the tone of the novel or the poem." (37)

A late novel, by GEORGE McDONALD, A. M., of Scotland, has been pronounced by the last-quoted writer, to be vital with Universalism.

He says, in much truth:—

"Hints of Universalism sometimes hit us in the discourse of the personages of the book. But oftener the author himself breaks in among them, and, snatching some suggestive incident, or some word of theirs, for impetus, soars into tracks of praise and thanksgiving, and tells us how he sees the circle of the Divine Fatherhood gathering up within its sweep all the souls that have fallen from his law, and that can reascend to it only when borne on the wings of his love."

Those works in any country, or language, which advocate the spirit of Universalism, without saying anything of its theory, in opposition to Calvinism, will meet with the highest appreciation from the public mind, or the best por-

tion of the community. And it is from the simple fact, that the doctrine and spirit are in harmony with the better feelings of humanity, and a cultivated taste for the purest and noblest form of literature.

The Scottish mind, when it gets roused up, and becomes enlightened, and drinks in of the spirit of the Gospel, naturally falls in love with the doctrine of Universalism. All that is needed in Scotland to-day, to make our faith a power for good, is some noble, spiritual-minded man to go there, and openly advocate the doctrine in such a way and manner as to deepen the conviction of those who now believe it, that it is the truth of God, and is destined to triumph in the earth. Her religious soil is good. It only needs the seed of divine love and truth scattered abroad, to give us a glorious harvest in that land of hills and valleys, where God is ever speaking, by his works, of his providential care over the races. May we not reasonably expect that some one will go out and sow the seed, and win a golden reward in the growth of Universalism? (c)

THE UNWRITTEN HISTORY OF UNIVERSALISM.

"History is a narrative of past events. Men, nations, and other actors appear on the stage of history, and perform their parts. The historian then finds scope for the exercise of his skill, in tracing the progress of events, and pointing out the connection of causes with their several effects. Our denomination has a history. Able writers have sought to give an account of the development of our faith and the various phases it has assumed. . . .

"The object of this article is to mention some matters connected with a yet unwritten history of our faith; I say

unwritten, because the events which I should be glad to chronicle have not yet taken place, — July, 1848. In a word, this history is not yet written, because we as a denomination have not yet *made* it history. I shall, then, be forced to speak of what *remains to be done*, and of what *ought to be done*, rather than of what has been accomplished."

Some of the things "*to be done*," of which the author speaks, have been done since the article was written, but there will always be an unwritten history of Universalism, because there will always be a work to do in the future of our progress. The writer adds: "There is work enough, then, for Universalism yet to do, in correcting prevalent evils, and in elevating the public character to its standard. We must labor to impress on men's minds the fact that, with increased advantages, there is a solemn obligation resting upon them for corresponding improvement. We must not content ourselves with merely inculcating a system of dogmas, but enforce the eternal principles of our religion in such a way as shall secure their practical observance. This done, the results of Universalism will be realized. These results have not yet been witnessed." [No — not in the twenty-three years past.] "Nor can they be, till a more earnest sympathy with man, and a stronger love of God, pervade the soul.

"It will be said here, of course, that Universalism is not to blame for what it could not help. No, nor is it to be commended for what it has not accomplished."

We may here remark, that Universalism, as an organization, cannot do many things, that its spirit, diffused abroad, will accomplish in due time. And those who would have no efficient organization, around which to concentrate our

power, and keep the spirit at work, are mistaken as to the best means to accomplish our *unfinished* work, and obtain a complete victory. The writer says : —

“ I feel that the principles of our system are those which must ultimately prevail throughout the world. If we are not gross hypocrites, every one of us must deem Universalism, in its leading truths and in its spirit, identical with Christianity. Of course, then, the virtues which Christ required of his earliest followers he requires of us. If we exhibit them not, the kingdom of God will be taken from us, and given to a sect bringing forth its fruits. Christianity must triumph ; that is a settled fact ; and if Universalists will not hasten its triumph, other and better men will be raised up to vindicate the truth, and apply it to every-day life. The time has come when its influence should be felt more widely. For almost eighteen centuries it has been perverted or neutralized by human corruptions and false theories. We profess to have returned at last to the primitive simplicity of the Gospel ; would that we could emulate the virtues of Christ ! . . .

“ But I will not take a desponding view of the future. Already there are indications of life in our midst. A more earnest tone breathes through our literature ; the subject of education is beginning to receive greater attention ; ready as we have been to admit everybody that asked for fellowship into our ministry, the people are showing that they desire a more intelligent clergy.” ⁽³⁸⁾

And yet, in all the periods of our existence, we have had a ministry able to meet the demands of the age in which it existed. The future will take care of itself.

PART III.

ORGANIZED UNIVERSALISM.

UNIVERSALISM ORGANIZED.

IN this division of our work, we have collated what is here presented from Articles, Discourses, and Essays, as far back as 1832, and so on through our denominational history. It will be seen by these selections what has been our thought, and the work we have accomplished by agitating the subject of organization.

A word by way of explanation may here be offered. It must not be supposed that there has been any *special* opposition to an organization. There has been an *indifference* upon the subject; and a warm and excited discussion, many times, as to what should be the *nature* and *character* of this organization. Many of those who composed our early fold came out from the various denominations then existing, and they wanted more liberty. Some have thought there was too much power vested in the clergy; while others have labored for the Congregational order of things. Yet, upon the whole, there has always existed a conservative element, which has been in favor of uniting all the good elements, of all the sects, and thus have an *effective* organization that would be a power in the world. As will be noticed, there has been a freedom granted to all, and each writer has expressed himself freely, as though

he was in earnest, and labored only to make the matter clear, and the work effectual in building up our denomination, and give character and influence to the cause which we have espoused. (c)

The first extract we present is from an article written in 1832. The author says:—

“Notwithstanding much has been said, and justly, against the schemes of sects and parties, and though much injury has been done to the cause of Christianity by sectarian combinations, we are unable to discover anything that should make us particularly unwilling to be considered as belonging to a religious sect. Nor have we, as yet, been able to see the propriety of any denomination, in their collective capacity, pretending to be the only class of men who are not sectarian, merely on the ground that they have no written creeds; for, on examination, it will be found that a number of persons associated for the purpose of obtaining certain specified objects, and united by a belief in doctrines which they deem important, are as much a sect as they would be were all their opinions written and subscribed by each individual for himself. We look at the spirit of the thing. And, most soberly affirming that there is nothing *exclusive* in the religion of Universalists, we as frankly admit our willingness to be regarded and treated as a distinct class of the Christian fraternity, — as a sect, having opinions, rules of discipline, and bonds of fellowship, peculiar to ourselves. And it is the design of this article to show, in the first place, that, *as a denomination of Christians*, we have interests at stake, and duties to perform; secondly, that, since we do occupy this position, the time has come when we ought to take high and independent ground, and go forward in the work before us; and, thirdly,

that there are many inducements to exertion which should be suffered to have their proper influence upon the minds and conduct of all intelligent believers of our distinguishing tenets." ⁽⁶⁾

The next article is an editorial from the "Universalist Miscellany" for 1844:—

"One of the greatest evils under which we, as a denomination, are suffering, is the want of organization. We have no general system of government. Some societies are organized on one plan, and some on another. It is the same with associations and conventions. This state of things does much to neutralize ecclesiastical action, and prevent that union which is so essential to our best interests. We are, I admit, united in sentiment and feeling. There is, considering the circumstances under which we have grown up, a remarkable agreement in regard to doctrines and measures. But, if we had some plan of ecclesiastical government, embracing societies, churches, associations, conventions, and the United States Convention, we could more successfully concentrate our exertions, and promote advantageously those great objects equally dear to us all. We hope to see such a plan of organization presented, discussed, and adopted, at the approaching meeting of the convention in Baltimore. Brother Sawyer, who was appointed to draft the plan, is well qualified for the task, and will, no doubt, give the subject that thought which its importance demands." ⁽⁴⁹⁾

Rev. Dr. T. J. SAWYER drafted a plan of organization for the Universalist denomination, as referred to above; and it was read at the U. S. Convention in Baltimore, Sept., 1844, and a committee appointed to lay the matter

before the different State conventions for their action. From this report, a few extracts are here given : —

“It can hardly be necessary for me to remark before this convention, that the rise and progress of Universalism in the United States has been distinguished by several peculiarities quite worthy of notice in connection with the present subject. Unlike most other denominations in the country, ours was not transplanted from the Old World. . . .

“Fortunately for us, we have no mother church beyond the Atlantic to which our hearts have, from their very childhood, been taught reverently to turn, and from which we have been left to draw, as from a pure fountain, all our principles of faith and discipline. American Universalism may, in an important sense, be said to be of native, rather than foreign, origin. It sprung up here, as we believe it would spring up everywhere, when the human mind is left free to study for itself the oracles of God ; and hence, at the present moment, we recognize few traces of foreign influence upon it.”

The compiler would here remark, that we have recognized but one master, even Christ ; and therefore our views and plans are not those of a *single* individual. Instead of conforming to the teachings of the early advocates of Universalism, we have been led to study the Bible, in connection with other helps, and draw our light from these, and thus see how near we can come to Christ ; for, the nearer we are to him, the more perfect will be our organization and principle.

Dr. Sawyer continues : —

“Thus it has happened that the Universalist denomination was left quite free to develop its own faith and polity,

neither of which can be regarded as the fruit of a moment, or the product of a single mind. By glancing at the history of what relates to our organization and government, it will at once be seen that our legislation has never been remotely prospective. The organizations which we have formed, and the measures we have adopted, have always been the result of some demand, some exigency, of the times. Our fathers have wisely seemed willing to defer to the future what the future might require, and were satisfied if they could perform what was called for by the present. The organization which we now possess is the fruit of such a principle carried out for sixty years. Independent societies were at first formed, which justly claimed and exercised all the prerogatives of independency. . . .

“As early as 1785, an association, composed of the several societies within its limits, was formed. But it was not till the year 1800 that even associations granted letters of fellowship, and license to preach. This was the work of several societies.” [If the compiler understands the subject, the General Convention was organized before State conventions, and embraced the churches and societies of the several associations! It was in 1833 that the United States Convention held its first session, at which time six States were represented,—these having formed State conventions. And one State after another has come in from that to the present time.]

Dr. Sawyer continues: “The outlines, or, if so I may speak, the frame-work, of a beautiful organization is thus completed. I see not how it could be improved by any outward modification; there is a regular gradation from the primary bodies to this, the highest which we know, and which embraces all the rest. Societies united form asso-

ciations ; associations form State conventions, and State conventions, in their turn, compose the United States Convention. It is a system of gradual representation throughout, from the lowest to the highest, from the individual to the whole."

The object of the above-named report, and the draft referred to, was to bring about a more perfect organization throughout the whole body, so that societies, associations, and State conventions, should work harmoniously together with the United States Convention. And this has been somewhat perfected. Its imperfections have been felt, and the consequence has been, individual writers have expressed themselves freely, as well as committees appointed to report for action.

FROM REPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES CONVENTION.

"We want a more *efficient* organization. . . . We have the name and some of the forms of organization, but nothing of the thing itself.

"Nor is it surprising that we have not. Organizations do not happen, nor are they speedily matured. Every ecclesiastical system that is making itself felt to-day in the religious world is the outgrowth of time and experience, perhaps of repeated attempts and seeming failures. Considering our history, and the circumstances under which our denomination has been gathered, it would have been little less than a miracle had we at once, or soon, taken form as a coherent and systemized body. An entirely new sect, only time and experience could teach us our wants, show us our work, and suggest our best methods. Above all, the advance party of Protestantism, the Protestants of

Protestants, it was the penalty of our position, like all new movements, to fulfil the parable of the Net; to take up a great variety, not only of miscellaneous, but of heterogeneous, materials, and, as a denomination, to include, with those who could easily harmonize and consolidate, those who were in no way suited for such a purpose: those of crude and extreme opinions; minds adrift; restless and impracticable spirits; those dissatisfied with all existing forms and methods, as well as established opinions, addicted to novelty, impatient of rules, inflamed in their ideas of personal freedom, loose and latitudinarian in respect to discipline, hostile to organization. Thus constituted, time has necessarily been required for the process of sifting and assimilation, through which only could such materials become a homogeneous and efficiently organized body.

“ Our denomination is nothing on its own account; but as the organization of a grand system of truth, and as a means of work for the world, it is a great deal, and next to God, and Christ, and the truth, it should have the loyalty of our hearts and the service of our lives. It is a bad sign to see any person, especially a minister, professing to be a Universalist, and yet disclaiming all sectarian sympathies, and standing aloof from all denominational action. . . .

“ Our work as Universalists is not simply to sow seeds, but to cultivate harvests; not simply to see that ideas are diffused, but to organize them, that they may be consciously held and efficiently served; and how can we do this, unless we each waive something of our sharp individualism, that we may be merged, — not into each other, but into our work, and labor in a spirit of mutual account-

ability, and service for great common ends? Oh, if we all, ministers and people, but appreciated the work to which we are called, — the world's necessities, the worth of truth, the inspirations of Christ's life and cross, and the quickening power of the love of God, — how we should be melted into a brotherhood of mutual consecration and labor, that would supply all other needs, and make us fellow-helpers unto the kingdom of God, and realize the destiny to which we are called!" (47)

"In submitting the foregoing plan of church organization, your committee beg leave to say that they are duly sensible of the delicacy and difficulty as well as importance of the task which has been assigned them; and they present their views with deference, not assuming that they are incapable of being amended and improved in the details of the plan, but at the same time in confidence that the fundamental principles of the plan are correct. And the committee may reasonably ask that their views shall be patiently and candidly considered before judgment is passed upon them. That we need a more consistent and efficient organization of our churches, that they are in a feeble and chaotic state compared with what they might be and ought to be, will doubtless be admitted by all true friends of our cause. We need a better organization, both for the proper development of our strength, and for the proper accomplishment of the great work of moral and religious culture which Providence has entrusted to our hands.

"The general plan of church organization which we recommend is in conformity, we believe, to the genius and spirit of our faith, and adapted to our condition and wants as a people. The leading object of the committee has been

to devise a remedy for the defects in our present mode of organizing churches, to secure a greater degree of uniformity, consistency, and harmony in our ecclesiastical polity, to knit believers together in a closer union, to cultivate more successfully the graces and spirit of the Gospel, and to make our people more efficient agents for the promotion of truth and righteousness in the world.

“ If any Universalist feels himself under a law of liberty which forbids him to unite in a uniform system of church organization, let him consider that even Christian liberty has its limits. It is bounded by the law of Christian love and duty ; and the only really open question is, What forms are best adapted to promote the culture of faith, charity, and piety in our communion? Let churches be organized as we propose, and still there is the amplest liberty of thought, of conscience, and of speech, that any mortal can require ; the amplest room for growth, expansion, and progress ; and needful changes to meet future wants can easily be engrafted on the proposed plan. And we do not expect any one will join a Universalist church, unless he thinks as we do on the main question, — unless he believes in the Bible and in universal redemption.” ⁽¹⁶⁾

The plan referred to above was not adopted in 1861. The brother, Rev. A. ST. JOHN CHAMBRE, who was appointed to correspond with the State conventions, in consequence of the national troubles, and other difficulties, did not obtain the necessary response, to make it a law of the denomination. He says :—

“ It is deeply felt that, so far as our denomination is concerned, the subject of organization is of vast importance, demanding continued and earnest attention at our hands. Organization, it is meant, which, while as uniform in its

workings as possible shall be so constituted as to further the highest interests of our Zion in all its departments."

The convention then appointed a committee "to prepare a *detailed plan* for the organization of the denomination." and all the "plans, reports, and resolutions on the subject," in the hands of the convention. They were true to their work, and made an able report in September, 1863, which was adopted, after much discussion, and sent forth for the action of the State convention. This, also, did not become the order of events, and further reports were made.

In 1866, we have the following remarks from the committee on the state of the church, which goes to show that we have not what we need, and have been so long seeking after.

"We greatly need a uniform system of church organization and procedure. Each church now organizes itself, and conducts its affairs in its own way. We have no custom, law, or form, to which any one feels bound by love or duty. This infinite variety casts distrust upon our authority and claims, and dissipates our religious life. It disheartens many of our ministers, and prevents them from doing for the church what they really desire to do. All are not good organizers. They work to advantage only as they have instrumentalities prepared to their hands. Give them a plan, and they can execute it. Open to them the way, and they can walk therein. When we ordain a minister we ought to put into his hands the organic form and law of the church he is expected to organize and cherish. When we send out a missionary we ought to supply him with an outline of the work we expect him to do, and furnish him with the organic plan of the churches we expect him to gather. No work of the General Convention is more

imperative than the adoption of such a plan, and no action of our churches is more demanded than a cheerful and universal acceptance. Uniformity will soon beget respect, and respect will soon awaken affection, and this will enkindle devotion, and this secures growth and zeal and hearty church life." (83)

The committee on the state of the church, in 1867, were led to make these remarks, in consequence of our progress in the work under consideration : —

"We can, therefore, but congratulate the denomination upon its present comparatively perfect system of organization, believing that this is one of the most important achievements in the history of our efforts since the establishment of the first Universalist Society in America. . . . And this organization has been adopted by the several State conventions of Universalists in North America, and virtually by the societies of this faith, so that we may say it has been ratified by our whole people. . . .

"We have said that there is a great and glorious work for the denomination of Universalists to perform. Ours is the call of God and Christ to go forth with a dispensation which includes the welfare of mankind. The brotherhood of the human family is our watchword. There is no idea of divine Providence, no view of Christ, no conception of religion, so grand, so beautiful, so full of satisfaction, as that it is our privilege to publish to the world. We have the leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing, not only of the nation, but of all nations. Our commission is to break down the barriers that separate race from race, and to send the waters of salvation round the globe, till, like its oceans, they touch every shore. Ours is not a conflict 'with confused noise and garments rolled in blood.'

We belong to an army which seeks, to be sure, the conquest of the human race; but our warfare is 'with lust, and passion, and self in every shape.' The command to us is, 'Hurl the venerated systems of oppression and wrong from their thrones, and erect in their place the pure, self-denying doctrines of the cross, and the worship of a God of infinite love.' " (83)

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOUR.

"The speaker said that, after the eloquent address they had just listened to, it only remained for him to indulge in a few remarks on a few plain thoughts. MR. GREELEY said the other day in New York, truly, that the Universalists had been excluded from the historical church. They have been excluded, too, from the evangelical church, and what was known as the liberal Christian church was indisposed to allow it any standing-place. So it followed that the Universalists were their own church,—did their own work in their own way. And it was fortunate for the cause they represented, for the ideas which had been given to the Universalists of this age to maintain, for the church itself, that it was so; for had they been received and acknowledged as parts of the churches mentioned, it was evident that their distinguishing truths, their leading ideas, would have been so burdened, so embarrassed by errors and superstitions, and by creeds connected with these churches, that the influence of the Universalists would have been greatly impaired, their doctrines corrupted, and methods perverted. There was no great idea that ever became powerful unless it first became *organized*, either in politics, religion, or reform. The reform bill in

England did not prevail until it became the watchword and rallying cry of a party — until Earl GRAY and Lord JOHN RUSSELL took it up ; and so with the corn-laws and extension of the franchise, when Mr. BRIGHT and Mr. GLADSTONE made it prominent. So it was also with the removal of slavery in this country. Nothing was accomplished in the matter until the fundamental truth was taken possession of by a party. The work now in hand — the truth, if indeed it be a truth they held — must be carried on by the party devoted to it. The question was, What is this church? What are its rights? Had it any business in the world, anything to do? If it had, then it deserved to be preserved and perpetuated ; and if not, then it was time it was buried.

“ It was an important question now, that they were about to take steps in regard to the future. The church held that Christianity was a complete, and perfect, and final religion, and that no religion would ever supersede it. It held its views in regard to it, and its interpretation of Christianity, to be more correct than any other. The Universalists believed in a God of love, — almighty love and almighty power, — of infinite purity and perfect justice. They believed in a mediator between God and men, — the man Christ Jesus, the image of God, — and they believed that this mediator was perfect, and that when his work shall have been accomplished he will be able to say that he had seen of the travail of his soul and was satisfied. They believed in a law of love, and that there was no reformation, no regeneration, no fallible power on earth, that did not spring from this. They did not hold, with the radical, that there was yet to be a better God or better Saviour, or they might be willing to agree that Christianity was a temporary thing, —

that it would pass away, and be succeeded by something higher and better; neither did they agree that Christ was only a man. If that was to be, indeed, the vital, essential truth of Christianity, — if all progress among men and things, and advancement, and the highest spirituality must have their source and inspiration in this alone, — he asked by what powers of responsibility and duty were the members of the Universalist church to protect and defend, establish and advance, its doctrines?

“The highest obligations rested upon them. They must stand together as an army, — not as a mob. They must carry its banner high, and march onward and keep step to its music, until all shall give way to it and recognize as true its doctrines. If any one failed or faltered in the performance of any just duty, in this respect, he was false to his religion. It was in the religious, as in the natural world, — the growth was from the low to the higher, from the imperfect to the perfect, and so it was that the Catholic church was the only form in which Christianity could obtain a lodgment in the world, and so developed the Protestant church, of which Wickliffe, Luther, and Murray were the pioneers. And it developed also this Universalist church of America.” (133)

“But if the mere declaration of these principles lays the world under obligations to Universalism, these obligations become immensely greater in proportion as the service rendered is more valuable, from the fact of an organization pledged to the advocacy and propagation of peculiar doctrines of profound religious importance. Universalism would have been of but small significance in the world, had its founders been satisfied with a merely negative result, a desultory warfare against Calvinism and

kindred errors. The separation of a few men from the orthodox ranks, to act the part of denunciation, and take the attitude of guerilla hostility, would have signified but little. And the literary critic, who has recently said that Universalism, though having formerly had considerable significance when it acted as a check upon Calvinism, is 'of no practical importance' now that it has become a sect, has shown himself an indifferent observer, and more, of affairs, whatever he may be as a critic. As well might it be said that a body of skirmishers has more 'practical importance' than an organized army ready for attack or defence. It is the force of organization, of concerted action, of conscious unanimity, of a great purpose animating thousands and moving them as one man, that gives significance to any movement, and makes any body of men 'of practical importance.' Hence, Universalism puts mankind in its debt, because, as a distinct, organized force, it stands forth among the working powers of the age, a constant witness of the vitality and practical value of its truths. While a separative movement, like that of ours, which should fail for want of a vigorous organization, would be a negative injury to the cause of religious progress, the constant presence, in so many communities, of a devoted church, pledged not only to the propagation of our doctrines, but to all Christian work, is a moral force in our behalf not often truly appreciated. Wherever our church-spire rises to heaven, wherever our bell rings out its glad invitation to worship, there is a potent influence at its silent work, ever pointing to a higher and truer faith, and teaching the great lessons of hope and love." (148)

WE MUST ORGANIZE.

“No one will be asked to prove that in most of the enterprises in which men engage, *organization* is a powerful if not an indispensable aid. Human efforts increase mightily when they are made to coalesce and concentrate in obedience to a controlling purpose. Every one is familiar with the comparison of the sticks. Taken singly, it requires but a child’s strength to snap them; taken together, the strongest hand cannot even bend them. The immense cables which support the suspension bridge at Niagara — strong enough for a heavy train of cars to pass over in safety — are composed of single wires, which, taken singly, are easily parted. How frail are the single threads which, united and twisted, make the cable which holds a ship in a tempest! Now this union of subtle elements of strength — this twisting into unity of numerous individual forces, each in itself comparatively trivial — is organization. It makes the difference between an army and a mob. It makes the difference whereby five shall chase an hundred, and an hundred put ten thousand to flight. The difference between a nation and the individuals it embraces is that of organization. Power combined, systematized, and directed, this is organization.

The church of Christ, however different persons may regard its origin and immediate purpose, is substantially an organization; a union of religious affections, aims, and results; a systematic agency for the upbuilding of the truth of Christ. We are then, alike from principle and policy, the advocates of organized efforts in things spiritual. We would have our own denomination emulate in this par-

ticular the wisdom of the older sects. Orthodoxy is a gigantic power in our land, and this not simply because the orthodox have individual zeal, but because they are banded together, and the sum of their zeal is a unit.

“Individualism has its place and its sphere in religion. The rights of private judgment are sacred, and no organism may presume to interfere. Each soul must worship, be dutiful, and have faith on its own responsibility. No man has the right to dictate opinions or practices for another. All this we grant; all this we shall strenuously defend, when the points are called in question. But the particulars in which affections, opinions, beliefs, and tastes agree, and in which we would have them act upon the minds and hearts of other men, must be organized, — must, that is, in order to their full efficiency. As missionary powers they will run to waste, if, indeed, they do not dry up, unless combined and guided to prescribed ends. Organization is of vast importance to the strength and effectiveness of every Christian enterprise.” ⁽⁵⁴⁾

“Two things are necessary, — ideas and machinery. Every movement is primarily the unfolding of an idea. That which makes a cause is the idea. At first the thought works directly, isolated from particular methods protesting against error and abuse. But soon it calls for instruments, — something to work with. It demands organization. It must employ machinery. So Christianity gets into institutions. Simple as an abstraction, it has very little effect in the world. Christ expressly declared that he came only to bear witness to the truth, and when the blood-drops of the cross had watered it, then the apostles were appointed to go abroad as the founders of the churches. The power of Christianity is in its machinery, after all, and not in its

abstract statements. It is hardly possible to separate, even in thought, Christianity from its visible church. There gets to be a vital connection between the idea and its organization, — so much so, that the organization has power even when it loses the idea, or becomes disloyal to it. Romanism is powerful by the simple grandeur of its organization. No matter what follies, what monstrosities of doctrine, or of polity, the coming council in Rome may put forth, they will be mighty for results, — will tell on the world, simply because backed by a vast and thorough organization. The great work of this centenary is organization. Let us advance the standard, then, for, however assured we may be of the final triumph of our ideas, that triumph will only be gained by bending ourselves earnestly, faithfully, and diligently to work with machinery.” (24)

“Universalism has an organic life. It possesses a body and a soul. It is not an abortion. More and more is it finding itself separated from denominational personalities by the boundaries of its own individuality. It is ceasing from its former aspect of a dogma, and becoming a spirit and a life. But still it is a child, coming slowly to the consciousness of its own powers and destiny. Like our country, ignorant of its providential future, pronounced by the nations still an experiment, afraid of its own energies, suspicious, as well it may be, of the reliability of its professed friends, and fearful of falling apart by the tremendous weight and apparent shapelessness of its limbs. Universalism is still a problem; a vaster and profounder question than its instructors knew themselves to have encountered; a most difficult, and, in some respects, unshapen existence to govern, maintain, and develop. But it were just as wise to pronounce our country non-existed, or

without national life or characteristic features, — broad, unrefined, and dusty though they be, — as to deny a positive, organic, and ultimately effective life of Universalism. Already we have an identity, a history, literature, temper and spirit, peculiarly our own. It is true our bones are, so to speak, but gristle, and our muscles comparatively soft, our proportions undetermined, and our features, it may be, unshaped. But it is plain that we have a strong and peculiar life, with no tendency to give up our firm convictions, or to place ourselves beneath others' protection. And this independent existence, combined with our inexperience and spiritual growth, make it important that the awakening consciousness of our faith should be studiously observed and truly considered; in short, that in every way our body should recognize its soul, and our soul its body." (120)

WHAT SHALL BE OUR ORGANIZATION?

"We need an organization well adjusted to our spiritual life-force. The nature of our religious life must first be studied. It has certain marked characteristics. It is unlike, in some respects, that of other religious bodies. It takes its character from our distinctive truths, and from the temper they have given our people. Other denominational organizations may properly engage our attention. We may possibly derive useful hints from them; but none should be adopted as a model. They may suit the life which informs them, but they might suit ours no better than the body of a rhinoceros the nature of a horse. Adaptedness to the peculiarities of a sect's life-forces must be first secured.

"Again. This life-force is not a stationary power, but

should be a progressive power. The organization, then, must be of a character to admit of this development, otherwise evil will result therefrom. It will fetter the spirit of the sect, rather than aid it in its work. The organization, let us remember, is an instrumentality. It is not a tabernacle for the spirit to dwell in, but a body for it to act in and to act through. We cannot build it up as one might build a house. It must sustain a more direct and intimate relation to a sect's spiritual life. It must grow to that life, — may I not say, grow out of it? Its forms and members must be determined more by the tendencies and needs of the religious life of which it is the agent, than by calculation and experiment from without. Such calculation and experiment may be needed; but they must ever have for their basis the tendencies and needs I have named.

“It is just at this point that many have erred. Desiring a perfect organization, they have entered upon the task of building one that should be complete, and that should answer for all time. They overlooked this law of development, which should govern the religious life of a sect. They forgot that an organization which exactly answered the needs of a sect in one age might not in the next. An organization nicely adjusted to our present spiritual forces might not meet the demands of these forces in a quarter of a century from this date. It certainly would not if we grow in spiritual stature. It might become an incumbrance. Organizations always will become incumbrances unless, in their formation, the law of spiritual growth is seen, and its monitions heeded. I find an illustration of my meaning in the civil governments of our era. Some of these governments rest unnaturally upon the people for whom they were instituted.

"The people are fretting and chafing under them, and are accomplishing their civil mission at a great disadvantage. The institutions which so hamper and fetter them once suited their national life very well. They are now obstacles rather than aids, and the people progress only as they are able, by the terrible throes of a revolution, to rid themselves of the outgrown and worthless institutions. We see other nations, like our own, for instance, who have fewer obstacles of this nature to contend with, and whose progress is more even, natural, peaceful, and rapid. In the first instance the civil institutions did not possess sufficient pliability and adaptability. They were inflexible, not elastic. They were *finished*, in a barbarous age, for the infancy of a people. The great error consisted in overlooking the law of growth, and in not conforming the institutions thereto. In the latter instance this law was recognized, and its power respected. The consequence is that the government grows as the social life of the people develops itself.

"This law must not be overlooked by us when we give our attention to the matter of organization. Not only must our present life-forces be regarded, but their law of growth also. Organizations, like all other bodies, must be so formed that they can grow with the life they embody. Unless they have this capacity, the spirit will either die in its shell, at length, or burst it, and reappear under more favorable conditions.

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"Let no man, or set of men, then, attempt to build up an organization that shall answer the demands of our spiritual life in all time. They could as easily build a body for a growing soul that would answer its needs in

manhood as well as in youth. The organization, like the body, recollect, is a matter of gradual growth, rather than of sudden and artificial creation. We may need, and possibly shall need, a more extended and complicated organization a century hence than we now require, for we hope to have a more healthful and vigorous spiritual life then than now.

“This organization must be wisely adapted to the end of denominational existence. And what is this end? Let me answer, briefly, that it is not the advantage of any class of men, nor growth in numbers and power mainly on the part of the sect. No, but it is the establishing in the world of its distinctive truths, and all others in the Christian system, and the aiding of these truths, with all legitimate instrumentalities, in their mission to human hearts, and over human lives. Such is the end of Christian organizations. Let all we do to perfect our organization be performed with reference to this end.” (139)

CHURCH ORGANIZATION

“Sometimes we hear people, when speaking of our faith, its prospects, and its appointed labors, speak lightly of organization, and doubtfully of the good results which grow out of the existence of ecclesiastical bodies and their labors to shape the moral and spiritual man.

“But we talk thus only when we take a superficial view of the necessities of human nature, and the means by which the moral cravings of the soul may be satisfied. It will not answer to talk about the powers of truth, and comfort ourselves by repeating the strains of enthusiastic poesy, for truth is ever dependent on the labors of man

for development. We may search throughout all the history of the past, in every department of the universe in which man has employed his powers, and whatever of truth he has developed and rendered useful has been done by persistent and formal labor; we look out beyond the limit to which his researches have extended, and all is blankness and darkness to the mortal eye. Truth may be there; a thousand glories intimately connected with the intellectual and moral worlds may be resting as the gold lies hidden in the depths of the noisome earth; but until we have lighted our tapers and descended the shaft, — until we have labored with pick and shovel, with fire and water, — we are not sure of its existence; and not until we have tried our faith as a system, not until we have tested it ‘as by fire,’ can we feel that we possess a full knowledge of its truth and adaptedness to meet the recurring necessities of humanity.

“We are called upon, then, to put forth our best efforts in behalf of that which is worth more to man than silver and gold, and dearer to the true Christian than rubies or the sparkling treasures of the glowing East. Just as our system is grand, elevating, and soul rejoicing; just as we believe that when properly applied to the ills of life it is powerful to hush the groaning and quiet the fears of mankind; just as we feel that it is the *truth*, and the power by which the hope-lighted future shall be made to show forth more of the goodness of God and the worth of mankind, — ought to be our endeavors to sustain it and render it the instrument in our hands for the accomplishment of much good and the harbinger of a more glorious day. In consequence of the wide-spread misapprehension of the objects of our faith, we are forced to encounter obstacles far more

difficult to overcome than a cursory glance would lead us to suppose, and, for this reason, if for no other, the friends of Universalism should be more than ordinarily energetic, when engaged in the furtherance of a system which places no indelible stain on the nature of man, and casts no reproach on the goodness and wisdom of Almighty God.

“Then let us organize, for in fact, organization is our most pressing need. There is scarcely a community in the whole country where, in the circuit of a few miles, a sufficient number of our faith could not be gathered into a church, and secure a portion of the time the ministrations of the Gospel. An organization once effected, and the securing of a minister will be an easy matter. Do not allow your fears to overcome your desire to see the cause of religion prosper in your neighborhood and in your homes, for a momentary reflection will suffice to convince any one that these fears, to say nothing of prejudices, are founded on fancy rather than on fact. A church has not for its object the restriction of any privilege; no man has a privilege to do wrong; wrong-doing is a usurpation, not a right; but its purpose is to bring together individual ability, that a mighty power may be brought to bear on the evils of the world. A church, properly organized, does not force a belief on man; it is a formal and visible union of those who are already one in sympathy and feeling. A church does not aim to chain humanity in its present position, make the world satisfied with the knowledge it already possesses, and contented with its spiritual powers of to-day; but its mandate ever is, ‘Grow in grace,

and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.'” (91)

CHURCH EXTENSION.

“I suppose that in this body church extension means the extension of organized Universalism. Of Universalism, because it is our interpretation of Christianity; of organized Universalism, because proper organization gives it consistency. Extension is that property of a body by which it occupies a portion of space. The word also signifies enlargement and the act of enlarging. Without organization we occupy no space; there is no body to be extended, nor any efficient means or instruction by which to carry forward a work of extension.

“If, then, the church is the thing to be extended and at the same time the instrument or means by which the work is to be done, it comes to this precisely,—the church must extend itself. That church extension is the work the time demands, I think we all agree. Else why this meeting; why the earnestness and devotion and sacrifice that have brought together such a body of Christian ministers and laymen? I believe that this one theme lies nearer the hearts of the brethren here assembled than any other. It presses its claims upon us in the form of duty to ourselves and the world, and therefore of duty to God. There are men in other professions and avocations in many respects well qualified for the ministry, and who can be brought into it when they are satisfied that people begin to care as much about their moral and spiritual interests as they do about their material interests. I do not mean by that that they will come into the ministry when they find that it will pay as well as other professions; but when they are made to

realize that the people are religiously in earnest, and that in a work like the ministry, which calls into play every noble faculty and energy of a man's being, they can have sympathy and co-operation, and not be obliged to feel that their labors and lives are thrown as pearls before creatures who are unable to perceive value in anything unless it be something good to eat. There was never a time when so many promising fields for missionary work were open to us; and to neglect them long will be to miss our golden opportunity. We ought, in my opinion, to put at least one man in each State, within the bounds of this Conference, into the missionary field; and the best men the denomination can furnish are the men for this work.

"I said that to us the church means organized Universalism. But you will pardon me for saying that, in my opinion, there is too much organized Universalism, that is not the church nor of the church, and this thought brings me to what I want to say about the best means for extending the church. I have said already that the church must extend itself. In other words, it must grow. We may invent all the machinery we please to extend Universalism, and we may pour out our money like water to keep the wheels of the machinery running; but our money will be thrown away, our labor will be in vain, and God will take vengeance on our inventions if we do not incorporate the elements of growth, the life-principle of Christianity, in our organizations. I know whole sections of country where twenty-five years ago Universalism was organized and said to be flourishing, and all that remains of it to-day is here and there a church edifice going to decay, inhabited by moles and bats, and only opened when some wandering vagrant, who hasn't either the brains or character to com-

mand a hearing where he is known, comes along and wants to unfold the wonders of science, or the mysteries of the spiritual universe. I know a man who, whenever any religious topic is broached in his hearing, slaps his hand complacently upon his pocket, and says he has ten dollars in there for any man who can prove the doctrine of endless punishment from the Bible. Noble man! Liberal soul! Why, I wouldn't give half that to have it proved twice over. But I suppose the man has had the ten dollars ready for the last twenty years, and probably has not given twenty cents for Universalism in that time; there is hardly a doubt but he will die with the ten dollars in his pocket. I mention him, because he is the representative of a class that constitutes a part of the residuum of what was once organized Universalism. Others have been smitten with the pestilence of progression, and have gone beyond Universalism, — to what depths beyond, who can tell? Brethren, let us not do this kind of work over again, and call it church extension." (60)

DENOMINATIONAL ORGANIZATION.

"I pass now to offer some remarks on organization, or what may be termed denominationality. That a denomination may be an efficient body, it must have laws or regulations adapted to its needs. Adopting the principle that the majority ought to rule, we have a basis on which organization can firmly rest. At first, perhaps, the majority will be on the side of disorder; but as the subject of organization becomes better understood, and more of denominational life is gained, the majority will decide that some organization is necessary. The organization approved will be an

expression in outward form of the religious life within. All the members may not have made equal progress at any particular time; nor may all be equally interested in the cause of religion and devoted to it. Diversity of opinion may exist, and diversity of views; so the body does not at once become a harmonious whole. But by united effort, by friendly discussion, by pressing the subject upon the attention of the people, progress will be made towards unity of opinion, and in due time a thorough organization can be effected.

“The religious life possessed is striving to develop an outward form that shall correspond with the faith professed and the religious spirit possessed. Some of these efforts may not be guided by wisdom, and will result in disappointment, perhaps in some instances in discouragement. But the work of development will go on until an outward form of comely proportions is attained, and the denomination becomes an efficient body, a living force in the world. Unless the spiritual life and the wisdom are possessed necessary to develop such an outward form, we must gradually fade away, leaving no trace of our name except on the pages of history.

“The necessity of organization is further shown in the fact that everybody which possesses life and grows is organized. The human body furnishes a fine illustration. The different parts or members are joined in harmonious union with each other, having one centre of intellectual, and one of arterial life. The body is not a bundle of discordant members having no union nor sympathy with each other, but is an organized unity, all the parts sustaining the most intimate relations with each other, and are most closely connected with the centres of life. The arterial and ner-

vous circulation is unbroken and perfect, and the will telegraphs its commands to the extreme parts of the body and is obeyed, and every sensation of pleasure or pain is participated in by every part or member. Disarrangement of the body is disease; disorganization is death; life and power are then gone; the body is a temple in ruins hastening to decay.

“If a religious body has no organization, its condition is represented by all unorganized bodies in nature. The rocks, though so hard and enduring, are perpetually wasting and becoming disintegrated by the influences to which they are constantly exposed; but a body which has vitality, or has organization, may receive injury and wounds, yet it recovers from them; it is variously exposed, yet it successfully resists the influences which war against it.

“This organization will embrace a creed; not indeed a full and exhaustive statement of truths received; not articles of faith so numerous and specific that no variety of opinion can be admitted or tolerated; but a general statement of the leading doctrines, the distinguishing features of our faith. It is not proper for one man, nor for a body of divines that prepares a creed for a great denomination, to assume that all truth is already known; that no progress can or ought to be made; that no change, or improvement, or advancement is to be expected. A people may boast that their creed was written in the primitive age of the church; that it is venerable for its antiquity as well as for the truth which it embraces; yet by imperceptible degrees those who profess it may glide away from it, and not recognize it as their faith when proclaimed from the pulpits consecrated to its advocacy and defence. I would not by any means advocate a rigid formula of faith; I would not

approve of a creed which allows no freedom of thought, no independent investigation, no new inquiry and research. Light is continually breaking in upon dark passages; science, the handmaid of religion, comes to the aid of the biblical student, and history and philosophy open their stores of knowledge to the diligent seekers after truth. We ought not to think that we are the people and that knowledge will die with us, so that we must embalm the truth in a creed; nor should we have a shibboleth which each one must pronounce or be cut off. Yet there are great truths, there are leading doctrines, which may be stated in a general way, all based on the Scriptures of divine truth, which the whole fraternity can subscribe to, which all can profess in good conscience, though differing on minor matters. Such a creed we ought to have; and perhaps we have all that can reasonably be asked in the articles of faith adopted at Winchester, N. H., in 1803." (64)

DENOMINATIONALISM.

"This is a long word. It takes seven vowels with seventeen letters to make it, and when made it is not found in the dictionary. It ought to contain a large amount of good meaning, or it ought not to be used very often,—it takes so much time to write and pronounce it. It probably is not a legitimate word, natural or hybrid, because it claims a Greek termination without owning a Greek origin. Still it is used, and some of our preachers are accused of lacking the qualities supposed to be essential to a lawful right to be in the denomination. This matter ought to be understood. Let us see.

"We have the Latin etymon, *nomen*, name; and *de-nom-*

ino, to name, or distinguish from another. Hence Webster gives, 'Denomination, the act of naming. A society or collection of individuals called by the same name.'

"We also have the synonym, *sectarianism*, which is defined to be, 'The disposition to dissent from the established church or predominant religion, and form new sects.' The word does not necessarily apply to Christians more than to philosophers and other theorists, though more commonly used in that way. When so applied, it designates either a likeness of opinions, or a community of interests, or some other idea or object which attracts around a class of followers or adherents who come to be known, distinguished, or denominated by a common name. . . . If the name is retained, its meaning will have greatly changed. Yet a wish is often cherished, and an attempt often made, to hinder such changes, — to block the wheels of progress, and fasten the world just where it is; as if the immortal mind, destined to endless progress in the light of God, could be checked and prevented from its high purpose and glorious destiny by the puny interference of some vote in council or decree in senate. God used the armies of the heathen to fulfil his purpose, and shall the pretended lovers of truth and godliness, the followers of the great Reformer, exhibit their weakness, folly, and want of faith, by attempting to prevent investigation and the assertion of conviction? Vain attempt!

" 'Not denominational enough!' What thought is purer and grander than that 'God is love, and the Saviour of all men'? Is not that the great central thought of Universalism? Do we not believe the true church is the 'body of Him who filleth all in all'? This is our denomination. For work, like so many grand divisions of an army, the

believers may be divided into corps, divisions, brigades, regiments, companies, sections, — as many and as minute as we will ; but in none of them is the individual lost ; for, after all, one is our Captain, our Master, and to him each shall report for himself. We are all ‘made kings and priests unto God.’

“ A broad, wide-reaching faith and hope which have no limits, but embrace the whole humanity, should lead to the possession of a charity like that which Jesus had, which ‘thinketh no evil, but believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth.’ The true Universalist can be no bigot, no enemy of his brethren, can desire and do no wrong, oppress no man, reject no truth, refuse no good, neglect no duty. Like Jesus, he is the brother of all men, — the poor, the humble, the sinful, the miserable, the vile. He must love them and do for them all that he can, — be willing to sacrifice, and, if need be, to lay down his life for them. In our several fields we may labor not to limit, but to enlarge, the boundaries of the kingdom. We may work alone, or together. Together in union and love, we can do vastly more ; for, if one can chase a thousand, two can put ten thousand to flight.” ⁽¹⁸⁾

DENOMINATIONAL POSITION.

“ Our position as a denomination is better to-day than ever before. We are stronger every way ; there is more of religious life among us ; our organization has been improved ; we give more attention to the Sabbath-school cause ; to the interests of education ; to the church and the communion ; to everything, in fine, that belongs to the

work of a body of living, active Christians. Looking back to the days of Murray and Winchester, or comparing the condition of Universalism in 1821 with its condition in 1861, who does not see that great progress has been made? — that not only have our societies increased more than tenfold, and our ministers in a like ratio, but that our theology has undergone a thorough revision, and become more settled in its character, more elevated in its tone.

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“The world owes a debt to John Murray, Elhanan Winchester, Hosea Ballou, Hosea Ballou, 2d, Thomas Whittemore, Russell and Sebastian Streeter, and others, who ‘fought the good fight and kept the faith,’ — the world owes a debt to them which it can only repay by an equal fidelity to the principles of truth, and an equal zeal in carrying forward the kingdom of Christ. We must not forget the labor of the fathers. All honor to them for what they did! Let us never disparage them. Let us never reflect upon their intelligence or worthiness. In these respects, considering their advantages and comparing them with our own, we shall never excel them. Happy will it be if we emulate their zeal, and equal them in devotion to the interests of truth!

“It is not, however, necessary for us, to do justice to our fathers, to stand where they did, or to hold exactly the same opinions. So long as we are true to our convictions of duty, so long as we keep the great end in view, — the final deliverance of every soul from the power of sin, — there may be room for minor differences of opinion, and all may be consistent with Christian progress. Indeed, it seems to us that a truer life grows out of the loyalty of the

individual soul than where all are forsworn to uphold and defend a particular faith. And we are stronger to-day, not because we have moved in one track, and have never swerved from the first rudiments of dogmatic theology, but because we have kept in motion; have sought earnestly for more light and more truth; and God has blessed us in answering our prayer, and in carrying us onward and upward to himself.

“We must not, then, measure our position by our nominal strength,—by the number of our preachers, or the number of our societies,—but by the diffusion abroad of liberal principles, whether in our own sect, or among the so-called orthodox sects; principles, which have done much to diminish scepticism, to promote a more reverent faith in God, and to do away with the prejudices against religion, and overcome the repugnance which the young had begun to manifest to the irrational dogmas which had been taught by the church. By giving to the world a more excellent faith, founded upon broader and more enlightened views of the character of God and the mission of Christ, the religion of Jesus has come to be a greater reality to millions of souls; its inner life is better understood; it is welcome to the heart; it answers the needs of the human soul; and richer fruit is ripening on the tree, to be gathered for the spiritual refreshment of the nations.

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“Again: we must do more for the church. Men and women must be made to feel that the church is a reality,—is a living force; that Christ had a great end in view in its establishment; and that we as a denomination cannot prosper, unless we devote ourselves faithfully to its inter-

ests. And we must do more for the Sabbath school ; more for the support of our academies and colleges. We must make some *sacrifices* for the sake of the truth. We have yet to be educated up to this point, — the point of giving, freely, cheerfully, without being urged, or having our donations dragged out of us reluctantly. ‘God loveth a cheerful giver ;’ and unless we give cheerfully and freely we cannot prosper. We fail more in this than any other Christian denomination that can be named. . . .

“Finally, we must do more in building up religion in our own souls ; in giving it the supremacy in the heart and the life. Begin here, and all we have above spoken of will follow naturally. The more we love religion itself, the more we feel its power in our souls, the more shall we do for its spread in the world. Begin here, with a personal interest in the religion of Christ, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things else will be added unto us. We shall then be Christians in word and deed. We shall throw our hearts into every work which demands our attention as Christian believers. Being liberal, we shall devise liberal things. We shall not ask how little, but how much, we can do. Every good word and work we shall love. And laboring in this way, the world will advance, our cause will commend itself to true hearts everywhere, and God will bless us with an abundant increase.” ^(a1)

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH.

“Our task implies self-regard as a church, and a statement of *facts, needs, hopes*. What are we to-day?

“1. Facts. In the first place Universalism cannot be

put in figures. Our statistics are undrilled or mutinous, and refuse to come into line when convention secretaries tap the drum. In the millennium we may expect the genius of our church to be as arithmetically as it is spiritually inclined; only the splendor of the result will be less striking from the fact that our majorities will be so overwhelming as to make counting superfluous.

"We can only judge then by the mass, — the front which Universalism shows to the world and the spirit that animates its host. Looking thus at it, its growth seems neither thwarted nor suspended. It is a time of *church-building*; and everywhere are starting from the soil temples conspicuous among others for even the vulgar glory of their architecture or their size. It is a time of *teaching* and *ordination*; young men never brought choicer gifts to our ministry than now. Above all, it is a time of *organization*, and although just here the elements have seemed most wild and vagrant, the crystals are beginning to shoot. There is hope that we have the right stuff to deal with after all.

"In a word, the state of our church is this: we are a people who have gained respectability and influence in the spiritual world by the power of our religious ideas; who have been driven forward by these even faster than we could comprehend what they implied, and who stand to-day a little dazzled, may be, by the prospect, earnestly asking by experiment and prayer what God would have us to do to become indeed in body and spirit the church of Christ on earth.

"For we must add to the facts of our position this other one, that we are enveloped by an immense cloud of sympathy, open and secret, with our doctrines of the divine love. All around us is the material for the church of the

future. It seems summer among the orthodox icebergs. Now such a thaw is simply providential. It defines the state of our church, — a state of privilege which no sect ever saw before. Huxley has found in the bed of the deep sea, only just now stirred by the dredge, a pavement of matter almost alive, — the first element of organic forms, — life in the raw or rough as it were, waiting some vital attraction to globe it into creatures that may float or swim or soar. So in the deep heart of the age seem to lie the instincts, emotions, faith, which are materials ready for our plastic hands. Idlers or self-conceited dreamers will let the precious opportunity go by; if we are workmen we shall be up and doing something here for an organized church.

“2. Needs. We have not been blind to these. Many of us have not been silent about them.

“We need pre-eminently to feel that the work of our age is the building up, *not a denomination, but a church*, — even the church of Christ. We need to feel that the point is not to simply get our doctrines hearing in the world, or scatter them for a sporadic growth, but to gather out of them and around them the forms of a spiritual, but not of necessity an invisible, kingdom. To think that we are anything less than the accredited missionaries of the highest interpretation of truth the world has ever known is to dwarf, not magnify, our office. While we are content with the secular title and position of a sect or denomination, we shall be full of blunders. We may count it all glory to win in the prize-ring of debate, and canonize the fists and muscle of our ‘champions;’ or we may cultivate the arts of sensation, pickling or sweetening the Gospel to the taste of those who use it as a relish for their staple worldliness; or we may stick in mere morality, or slip on the smooth incline of

'liberalism,' or do some foolish or unchristian thing that a church was never meant to do. We must feel that our duty is to construct, on the basis of our religious ideas, a church that is not an anachronism, or a fossil, or an idol with golden head and feet of clay, but a symmetrical and efficient body, with brain to think, and heart to feel, and hands to work, and knees to bend in prayer. And to get this body we probably need less mechanical skill of our system-makers than we do simple obedience to the laws of the kingdom. One of these great statutes is 'To every seed his own body,' and if we are loyal to the church-idea, which blossoms from the Gospel of God's universal grace, we shall find form that will not rest uneasily upon our cramped limbs, and methods that will not chafe the freedom of our souls.

"3. Hopes. There are only two classes—let us hope there are no more in them than are needed to keep up the proper distinctions of 'head' and 'foot'—who can gather from the present of Universalism anything but reasonable and courageous hope. The first are impenetrable conservatives,—iron-clad to enthusiasm,—grimly playing to themselves that it is very early in the nineteenth century still. The others are those men, proofs of nature's wild sport in the distribution of species, whose bile allies them with Calvinism, while their intellectual convictions hold them to our ranks; who obstinately refuse to go to 'their own place,' and persist in seeing, in the visions of the night, the 'gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire' that hover in the air and prefigure the ruin of the times. Searching medicine may relieve these; nothing less than the electric currents of a thunder-storm will shake the first.

We ought to be hopeful if we believe our doctrine true,

— if the possibilities and first-fruits of a great work can inspire us, — if heaven is not too far to shine upon our faces. Especially should we draw from the wells of hope, while we are thinking so joyously of the era which our church is hastening to accomplish.

“ We have made great plans, for we have great hopes. Out of our enthusiasm, gifts, sacrifices at this memorial time will be born the spirit of the next hundred years. Let us honor this jubilee all the more, remembering that our faith has been created for an age, not a day. Let us ask for our own sakes to be kept faithful to our trust, since, if we shall fall away from the cause we have chosen, it is *our* loss, and not the ruin of God’s truth. For, of all truth, that which gives us as a people life, and breath, and all things, — the truth of God’s universal love, — best deserves in its comparison with other creeds the praise : —

“ *“ They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure. Yea, all of them shall wax old as a garment, but Thou art the same and Thy years shall have no end.”* ⁽⁵³⁾

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH.

“ In humility, in solemn earnestness, I shall speak to you concerning the work that lies before us. All who accept the belief that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of souls, are called by the generic name, Christians ; and as we divide up into different sects, we take specific names from some doctrine of faith around which we cluster as a nucleus. We have taken the name Universalists ; and that name means something. In the *first* place, it emphasizes the doctrine of the universal fatherhood of God, and the evanescence of evil. From these two doctrines it teaches

the salvation of mankind. The sublimity of the truths we preach is felt even by those of other denominations, and a prominent member of one of the evangelical churches said, if Universalism be true, it is one of the grandest truths that has ever been revealed to the race.

“I do not think that we have arrived at a time when we can leave preaching doctrine. I think it is the duty of the Universalist church to preach its faith, not as a warm south wind in summer, but as a vigorous storm, that shall sweep before it all that is in opposition to its truths. A true believer in the great doctrine of God’s fatherhood will never tell you of a hope or a thought that he has which is not permeated with this divine thought. No logic of the world made it, and I cannot conceive of a time in the future when it shall be outgrown. The fact that you cannot talk of God’s love without the heart of humanity opening to receive it, shows us what our duty is. Just as it is impossible for the sun to shine upon the flowers without their opening to receive the light which is their very life, just so impossible is it to talk of the ceaseless care and boundless providence of God’s love unifying the race, without our answering it back out of our very souls. I believe that we ought to preach Universalism; not a mixed, mongrel faith, but one in which we can believe as a denomination, — which we feel permeating our lives. Out of this grows our need to have the means for the promulgation of our doctrine.

“*Secondly.* I think it is the duty of the church to provide instrumentalities whereby we may diffuse our thoughts and publish these grand truths to the world. Tracts and books which find their way even into the ranks of other denominations should be sent out in greater numbers. There is

danger of dryness in our publishing, and it has been complained of frequently in the past ; but the duty still exists, and our people should put forth more energy and remedy the evil. There should be provided a publication fund for the issuing of matter explanatory of our peculiar tenets. For while the speaker's word is soon forgotten, and the efficacy of many a verbal exhortation may be doubtful, the printed page lies ever before us. Provide, therefore, for the publication of tracts and books, as you provide for the ministrations of the pulpit. *Thirdly.* We should do all in our power to furnish for the pulpit earnest, able, clear-minded men. In this our way is hedged up continually ; for the glittering splendor of wealth and the allurements of business attract those who are fitted for the higher walks of life. Our young men are swallowed up by the great forces of the world, and in order to induce them to espouse our cause we must offer strong incentives. Now, so great is the demand for more ministers that we are establishing *this* great fund to aid young men in their studies preparatory to entering the ministry ; but there is danger of crowding into our pulpits men who have not sufficient mental stamina. *Fourthly.* I must say that it seems to me the duty of Universalists to utilize the vast moral power which can be found among the women of the denomination. We have sinned in this respect the same as other denominations. Our women have not done enough in the past ; when you look at the great moral power of woman, can you not see *one* reason why the Protestant church has been so powerless as it has ? The Catholic church has been aided greatly by its women ; with us woman may attend the fairs and help in the Sunday schools, and she may go to the conference meetings, where, if she have the

temerity, she may offer her prayers and her heart convictions. And this is nearly the extent of her usefulness. But the Catholic church finds a place for woman everywhere. Does a woman have a great gift of healing, so that she can go to the sick and sorrowing with aid and words of comfort and encouragement? The Catholic church finds her a place to work. Has she a gift of teaching? The Catholic church finds her a chance to exercise it. If a woman has great executive ability, she is placed over some great institution. The ability of the women in the Catholic church is almost incredible. There is one lady in Chicago who has one hundred and eighty institutions under her charge in different parts of the world. We know of nothing like it in the annals of the Protestant church; and although the Catholic church may in many respects be open to the charge of bigotry, I would ask if the Protestant church has done more in this direction? Many a woman of the grandest abilities is being gradually lost from the ranks of society, and being swallowed up in the Catholic church, to be forever lost to the Protestant world. They do not boast of their converts, but slowly, surely, and silently they are making headway among us." (33)

"As a people or church, we need clear, intelligent views of this work whereunto we are called. Every church has its mission to perform. What is ours, and by what means shall we best accomplish it?

"1. We are seeking—it is quite true—to change the convictions, the religious opinions, or beliefs of mankind. The church, in our view, has become corrupted in doctrines as well as in rites. And we desire to redeem Christianity from the traditions and dogmas with which it has become both mixed and confounded. It is not our business to kill

orthodoxy, nor fight orthodox people, though we are to contend earnestly for the primitive faith, the faith once given to the saints. To root up error simply, or exterminate it from men's minds, leaving them like empty rooms swept and garnished, is not enough. We wish to realize our religion, to feed men with inspiring, living truth, to give them loftier thoughts of God, more spiritual views of the mission and work of Christ, and grander and more quickening views of the coming life, and the final, glorious destiny of the human soul. We must give men not negations but affirmations, a real, positive faith which shall satisfy their hearts, and transform their lives.

"2. It is our business to apply this faith to individual men, and to society around us, to ourselves, and to the world; to all the customs, laws, institutions of men. Our religion is to leaven the whole character as well as the whole race of mankind. It must not be received as a matter of ornament to please the imagination or the eye, or a luxury to gratify the taste, or a philosophical speculation upon which the reason will delight to dwell, but as a practical, reforming, recreative force, which shall change men's hearts even as the rivers of waters are turned, which shall level the hills and fill up the valleys and make smooth the rough ways, and prepare men and states and nations and the world for the 'kingdom of heaven' upon the earth.

"3. To accomplish this work, to give vitality to this faith, to perpetuate its principles and extend its spirit, we must welcome every method and agency which the highest wisdom can devise and approve. Our preaching must be bold, aggressive, earnest, pressing, to those within the fold as surely as to those who are now of the contrary part. There must and can be no compromise with principles.

diametrically antagonistic to our own. We must preach the whole counsel of God. Let us take care that we preach it 'in love.' 'He that *winneth* souls is wise.'

"We cannot afford to discard *forms*. Universalism is more than an idea, a philosophical speculation, a logical deduction, or even a revealed intellectual truth. It is a spirit and a life. It appeals to the conscience, and the heart, and the imagination, as well as to the judgment or reason of man. It appeals to our whole nature. There are thousands who can never be converted by preaching merely doctrinal sermons, or giving expositions of disputed texts; thousands who care but little for such things. And we shall never convert any man simply by bringing him to an intellectual reception or acknowledgment of our doctrines or ideas. The spirit of our blessed faith must enshrine and express itself in holy symbols and sacred rites. For the new wine new bottles are required, else it will be as water spilled upon the ground, which cannot again be gathered up. The Romish church, absurd as many of its dogmas are, has yet, and for ages must have, a marvellous and almost unknown hold on the millions who worship at her altars. The Quaker church, expecting to conquer the world by the mere propagation of liberal ideas, is dwindling away. Individualism must destroy unity and all church-life. It is sheer madness to talk of any man's fighting on his own hook. In the Christian warfare we have a Leader and Commander, and there must be ranks, and orders, and combinations of influence, strength, and means. Never shall we realize the perpetuity for which we pray, or sigh, until we are organized into one grand army, and ready as one man to fight the battle for humanity and truth.

"And, for our own individual life, there must be appro-

priate methods to feed and trim the lamps which have been kindled in the holy places of the soul ; there must be gardens and nurseries for the cultivation of flowers ; and fountains and pipes, out of which, and through which, the healing waters shall flow. We want more church-life, — more religious life, as a people, and church, — and without this we must inevitably stop where we are, or be plucked up by the roots and cast into the fire.” (86)

PART IV.

UNIVERSALISM IS CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY DEFINED AS UNIVERSAL.

“CHRISTIANITY dispenses its blessings universally. It is not confined to a favored few, but goes out on its errand of mercy and pardon to every son of humanity. *Universality* is stamped upon its very nature; and it is this feature which renders it superlatively lovely and glorious. The angelic messenger, who first proclaimed it to the world, declared that it was for all people. Its great Author and Promulgator affirmed that all were destined to share in its heavenly bounties. The universal voice of prophecy is to the same effect. It came from a Universal Father; it was founded by a Universal Saviour, and its plans, its counsels, its admonitions, its warnings, its promises, its glories, are all universal. It goes to the garrets of poverty as well as to the palaces of wealth, and offers treasures which thieves cannot steal, nor moth nor rust corrupt. It is not scornful of rags, neither is it corrupted by glittering dust. It goes to the chamber of death, and its ministering angels wait around the bedside of the sufferer, calming the last moments of his earthly existence, and making joyful his descent to the grave. It watches around the Temple of Virtue, and guards her shrines from the polluting touch of unholy hands. It makes glad the

heart of the youth and innocence, and is our staff and defence in the winter of life." (41)

Christianity is the embodiment of the doctrines of Christ ; and since it is a *universal* religion it must have the good of all in view, and consequently it is universal in its practical applications. If it seeks the highest welfare of all men, how can it be anything else than Universalism, since this doctrine inculcates the final holiness and happiness of all, through the power and influence of the Gospel? (c)

"The work of Christ is to redeem all from sin ; and by the completeness of his work, through the influence of his Spirit, the world is to come into a full and perfect oneness. . . . Christianity is the inspirer of genius. It gives tone to art in all its departments. Painting, sculpture, architecture, all have their highest development in Christianity. Christ came to reveal the will of the Father, and all the improvements of the age, whether in science or art, point to what God is leading the world, — even to absolute perfection, when Christ shall be all in all, man perfect in him. Christianity alone solves the great question of destiny. Without it all is dark and uncertain, but with it all is bright and clear." (42)

"Christianity is yet but imperfectly understood, even by those who, in profession, receive it, and but little of its great work is yet accomplished ; but its origin and its nature are divine, and its destiny must be increasing success and ultimate triumph. It has nothing to fear from the most searching investigations, nor from the boldest speculations by which its authority is questioned. To fear for Christianity is to distrust the true and right ; and that is a kind of atheism. Merely conventional faith may

become less general through the freedom of thought and inquiry ; but that living, spontaneous faith, which can come only from freedom, will increase in proportion as our religion and its real claims are understood. Christianity, in its spirit and in its form, is eternal. It is animated by the breath of God, and can never die. No folly of its friends and no violence of its enemies can disturb its secure basis, for it is founded upon a rock, — the Rock of Ages.” ⁽¹⁰²⁾

“Consider these few brief hints, follow them out in your thoughts, and you will perceive that every principle of sound morals, of good government, and all true goodness and religion, is bound up in the knowledge, application, and practice of Christianity as understood by Universalists. No other view of the Gospel is so well adapted to the human soul, none so eminently and perfectly practical for moral agents in every duty, circumstance, and relation in life. *True it must be*, therefore ; and therefore useful, because true. All other systems are beneficial only so far as they contain portions of Universalism, and would be fatally injurious were they utterly destitute of this spiritual atmosphere of Divine Love and Truth.” ⁽⁸⁾

Thus it will be seen that Christianity is a universal religion, and if it is triumphant over all evil and opposition, as we believe it will be finally, then the doctrine of Universalism is the truth of God ; for this cannot be false, only on the ground that Christianity fails to accomplish its great and glorious work, for which it was introduced on earth.

“For we claim, and we believe that our claim is well founded, that Christianity at its commencement was Uni-

versalism; that the Scriptures of truth clearly teach our doctrines; that Universalism, in the form of primitive Christianity, made its way throughout a great portion of the heathen world, and pervaded nearly the whole of the Roman empire.

"But we are well aware that it will be said, in reply to this, that we assume the truth of the very points to be proved, that is, that primitive Christianity was Universalism; and that the Scripture writers believed this doctrine, and designed to teach it to those who came after them. To this we reply, that we have a better right to assume the truth of our doctrines than our opposers have, because we believe and teach a better view of God's character, the object and end of his creation and government, than our opponents have ever taught or known." (117)

ITS IDENTITY WITH CHRISTIANITY.

"Christianity and Universalism are substantially the same, the principles of the one involving those of the other. In the present article the attention of the reader will be called to the illustration of this position. Unless the truth of it can be fairly sustained, no one, it is readily admitted, can rationally espouse, and give his support, to the latter sentiment.

"The former no enlightened Christian can ever abandon. It is the paramount blessing of existence, the chief good of man. Take this from the follower of Jesus, and every other system and object, even being itself, is reft of its principal value. The highest and most cherished possession of earth sinks at once to a mere trifle, dwindles down to utter insignificance.

“Christianity is truly incomparable in worth, inasmuch as its grasp of good to its subjects is all-comprehensive. Its lofty and benevolent mission embraces the interests and the destiny of man’s whole existence, of time and of eternity. Hence, until we are satisfied, beyond a reasonable doubt, that there is no dissonance between the principles and aims of Universalism and those of pure Christianity, we cannot, without obvious inconsistency, give our support to the former. Is there, then, any dissonance between them? Are they antagonistic with respect to each other? Many, I am aware, whose sincerity and piety I would by no means call in question, suppose they are. They have been made to believe that the profession of Universalism is utterly inconsistent with that of Christianity, on account of the discrepancy between the principles, tendency, and results of the two systems, if two they may be called. But may not these honest brethren be mistaken? They surely may. Such a thing, to say the least, is within the limits of possibility. ‘To err is human,’ and they have not risen above this common lot of humanity; at least, they have exhibited no proofs of such a felicitous elevation.

“Now, the truth of the case, I have no doubt, is directly the reverse of the conviction to which I have here referred. There are many considerations which tend to evince this fact, a few of which I will mention. And,

“1. There is a striking similarity between the two systems with respect to the date of their origin. Many, I have no doubt, very honestly believe that the doctrine of the salvation of all men is a thing of quite recent date, — one merely of yesterday. This, however, is not true. Universalism, so far as its principles and aims are concerned, is as

old as the Gospel itself. Its birth was with that of this great dispensation of God's mercy to man.

"This is evident from the fact, that, in promulgating the fundamental truths of Christianity, Christ and his apostles expressed, with equal clearness and force, the essential elements of Universalism.

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"2. There is a remarkable affinity between the two systems, with respect to the opposition they have encountered, and their signal triumph over it. From their very infancy a formidable war was waged, and has been resolutely prosecuted against both; and yet neither of them has fallen, nor is likely to fall. Each is celestial and eternal, and has, therefore, lived and prospered in despite of all its enemies, while age after age has rolled onward, and carried with it its peculiar productions and institutions.

"3. There is an essential sameness in the nature and extent of the fundamental principles upon which the two systems are founded. They rely not upon the puny arm of man; but upon God, upon the infinity of his perfections, upon his unerring wisdom, his omnipotence, his love, and measureless goodness. They rest upon the sublime fact, that 'the Lord is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works,' and will 'endure forever.' That Christianity is based upon the broadest and purest benevolence, no one in the least acquainted with it will pretend to deny; nor can it be questioned that the same is true with respect to the theory of universal salvation. Hence, in regard to the nature and extent of their principles, Christianity and Universalism are essentially identified, are seen to be one and the same thing.

"4. Universalism and Christianity both teach that the

love of God to man is not an ordinary social affection, but a peculiarly deep and enduring sentiment, and one, too, of a peculiar character,—that of the love which a father bears to his own children. This fact clothes the divine love with a power and trustworthiness peculiar to itself. It presents it to the view and acceptance of man, as parental love, carried up by perfection to infinity; and, therefore, as free from all fickleness, weakness, or possibility of ever coming to an end. No fact can be plainer, nor more incontrovertible, than that Christianity distinctly and most impressively inculcated the great doctrine of the universal and eternal paternity of God.

“Now, these are precisely the teachings and the requisitions of Universalism upon this point of doctrine. With respect, therefore, to the paternity of God, pure Christianity and the system of the common salvation are substantially one and the same.

“5. Universalism and Christianity ascribe the same character and office to the Lord Jesus Christ. They both teach that he is ‘the Son of God,’ and the ‘head of every man.’ They both hold him up to the view of the sinful and the helpless everywhere, as ‘the Saviour,’ not of a sect, nor of a party, nor of any select portion of the human race, but ‘of the world,’—the whole world; as the Lord of life and of glory, who shall subdue all things to himself, and reconcile them to God by the blood of his cross. How plain it is, then, that in this view of the two systems there is the most perfect resemblance, one which obviously identifies them as one, and which cannot be found between Christianity, as defined by the New Testa-

ment, and any partialist theory ever propagated in the world?

“Universalism and Christianity are identical with respect to their great practical aims. They both seek to subdue the whole man, and the whole race of men, to God and to duty and to happiness. Their object is to curb the turbulence of passion; to open the eyes of the understanding; to perfect the character and spiritual condition of universal man. In a word, their paramount aim is to constrain every human being to love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself.

“I can only add, in conclusion, that the two systems are identified by the view they present of the final destiny of man. They agree in representing him as a candidate for immortality. They, with one voice, teach the great doctrine of the resurrection of our entire race from the dead to a spiritual, incorruptible, and interminably happy life.” (17)

“Universalism is Christianity in its great leading teachings concerning the character, government, and purposes of God, and the duty and destiny of man. It is not only a *form* of Christianity, but we verily believe that it embodies more of the teachings and spirit of Christ than any other form or system of the Christian faith now held and professed among the denominations of Christendom. This may sound like arrogance and presumption, especially to those who have been so hasty in unchristianizing us; but it is not so intended. We deny the Christian name to no believer in, and follower of, the Lord Jesus Christ. We refuse not to extend our Christian fellowship to those who differ widely from us on those very points of doctrine which have drawn upon us the reproach and persecution and enmity and anathemas of the so-called orthodox around us.

We do not even refuse to extend our denominational fellowship to those who hold to many doctrines with which Universalists, as a body, have no sympathy whatever, provided they are believers in Jesus of Nazareth, as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, and receive the Scriptures as containing the revealed will of God. Consequently, in claiming our system of faith to be, in verity and substance, not merely a form or portion of Christianity, but Christianity itself in all its great leading particulars of doctrine and precept, we deny none the Christian name, and exclude none from Christian courtesy and fellowship.

“That Universalism is Christianity, even the Christianity of Christ and his apostles, is, we think, capable of very clear and abundant proof. Not one declaration can be named in the entire teachings of the Saviour, and of his apostles after him, that we do not most firmly believe, — not according to the modern construction of his words perhaps, but according to the Scripture meaning of Scripture phrases, and as a rational understanding of the circumstances under which the words were spoken would seem to require them to be construed.” ⁽³⁾

THE CENTRAL PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSALISM.

“Universalism claims to be of divine origin, and affirms that the distinguishing peculiarity of the mission of the Son of God is the complete and final triumph of truth over error, of holiness over sin, and of the resurrection over death. The first and most obvious method of testing the foundation of its demands upon our faith is, to ascertain clearly the nature and operation of the government of God, as unfolded in the Redeemer, for the deliverance of the

race, and to follow man through the vicissitudes of life, and of rewards and punishments, into the resurrection state, and onward to the period in which God will be all in all, and then to try the strength of the various testimonies upon which it relies for support and demonstration.

“The *central* principle of any theory must contain its *central* idea, and as this central idea in Universalism is the love of God, so the principle involved must work out the highest good of all in due time. And a survey of this glorious field is intensely interesting, for it brings to view the love of God as the source of the plan of redemption; the promises of Jehovah to the patriarchs in regard to blessing all the families of the earth, through Christ the seed of Abraham; the communications of the prophets in reference to the completion of the Saviour’s reign; the teachings of Christ in relation to the nature and object of his mission; and the positive evidence furnished by the apostles. This testimony is ample in its details, and conclusive in its support of the truth, that the benignant work of the Saviour will be consummated by equality with the angels upon ‘the children of the resurrection.’ What a glorious faith this truth confirms! How it elevates the soul’s conceptions of the character of God, of the ultimate destiny of the race, and of the true sources of consolation! How brilliant the light with which it dispels darkness from the grave!

“But, notwithstanding the attractions which this aspect of Universalism presents, it is my intention to pass beyond them, and follow the subject into a different development, where facts may be obtained to show that the reconciliation of the race is not only the truth of God, but is also the moral life of the world. This development will be attained

by searching for the great central principle upon which the testimonies and the various points of the doctrine of Universalism rest, by examining the corner-stone of its divine plan, and by tracing the threads of its relation to human action as it is presented and enforced by Christianity.

“Take, for instance, the great law, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.’ Now, we have neither an idea nor a creed which teaches us that the application of this law is bounded by a limited neighborhood, by the walls of a sect, or by narrow prejudices. The person who has obtained a wide view of the genius of Christianity, and especially has studied the broad and comprehensive truth taught in the parable of the good Samaritan, cannot fail to perceive that it overleaps all *partialisms*, and refers to the spirit we should cherish towards our fellow-creatures, of whatsoever nation or clime. And so entirely does this precept comprehend all duty that the apostle affirmed it: ‘Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.’ Associate with this precept the command which the Saviour gave in the following form: ‘Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.’ This precept, like the first, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,’ involves the entire duty of each man towards all others. Its application is as wide as humanity. Combined, these divine laws open up a noble highway, in which they invite us to walk and make constant progress in attaining the Christian character. But, though thus distinctly affirmative in their teachings, of what moral evils are they not the antagonists and do not aim to overcome and destroy? There are none.

“Now what is the foundation of these precepts, but that

of *overcoming evil with good*? Do they not virtually affirm that moral evil has no permanency in itself; that it can and ought to be forsaken; and that justice, righteousness, and benevolence should prevail? Assuredly. And this foundation, this inner principle, is only a transcript of the grand truth upon which the plan of the salvation of the world rests, namely, the destruction of all evil, and the establishment of permanent and endless good." (30)

If the doctrine of Universalism is the truth of the Gospel, — and we cannot see how any other system of faith harmonizes with what this reveals for man's belief, — then, truly, it must be Christianity in all its essential elements. It is not only what man desires, but it is so well adapted to his nature in all the relations of life, that he can neither hope nor pray for any other view of the divine government.

God would not reveal anything to his children which is not adapted to our nature; and as he has created us after his own likeness, he has made us capable of loving him with all the heart. And as love is, and ever must be, the *central* principle of his character, so it is the *central* principle of whatever bears the divine image, — whether man, the Gospel, or Christ. His image is seen in his Son. It is revealed in the Gospel, and, as the Gospel is but another term for Christianity, we here witness, to the best advantage, the *likeness* of God in the doctrine of Universalism, which is founded upon the love of *One* who has revealed himself to us, as "The Father of all spirits," and unto whom all must come in the spirit of love, before the work of Christ can be accomplished. (c)

THE REFORMING SPIRIT OF UNIVERSALISM.

“In speaking of the reformatory character of Universalism, we shall endeavor to show, briefly, that it possesses a decided superiority over all other religious systems, on account of the high, and exalted, and ennobling character in which it represents human nature. By describing God as not only the Creator, but the Father, of universal humanity, it ascribes to all mankind the character of children; thus establishing between God and man the relationship of parent and child.

“Now, while we would be the very last to encourage a vain, self-glorying spirit, or for a moment lose sight of the fact that all men are sinners, and have come short of the glory of God, we are still strongly opposed to the practice so common among a certain class of public teachers, of dwelling almost exclusively on the dark and repulsive side of the picture, and thus depressing and degrading human nature; while they seem entirely to lose sight of the fact, that man possesses some of the nobler attributes and characteristics, which give him kindred with angels, and affinity with God. We admit most readily that the minister of religion should plainly and fearlessly point out the errors and vices of mankind, and earnestly entreat them to turn from their iniquitous practices, and do that only which is lawful and right; but still, if it be a truth, that man is the child of God, and possesses mental powers which will continue to strengthen and expand until he will rival the holy angels, who stand in the presence of the Deity, it is right and proper that we should be made duly acquainted with this fact, and be

permitted to anticipate the high and holy destiny which awaits him beyond the grave.

“We all know that while children are easily discouraged by having their best performances and attainments depreciated, and represented in an unfavorable light, an opposite course will inspire within them a feeling of virtuous emulation, cause them to put forth additional exertions, and induce them to exert all their powers in pressing forward in the march of improvement. And men are children of larger growth, and are discouraged by similar obstacles, and inspired with zeal by similar inducements. Hence it is evident that, as Universalism represents human nature in a far more ennobling light than does any other religious system, it is far better to reform the vicious, and lead men to a closer approximation to the purity of angelic character.” (40)

In seeking man's reformation, we should state the case fairly, that we may reach his heart, and bring him back to his Father's house. And this can be done the most effectually by showing him his relation to God, which relation is never changed; for we all bear his likeness. The Bible represents us as the children of God; and the children of the devil only by wicked works,—not in our relationship. The prodigal son was *dead* only while in the path of evil-doing; and, on returning home, his character, and not his relationship, was changed. And this is the truth that contains the best reformatory elements, and may be preached to the saving of the soul. (c)

ADAPTED TO THE WANTS OF MAN.

“Were I to say that Christianity is adapted to the wants of man as a moral and spiritual being, I should give utterance to a truth from which few would dissent. But were I to assert that the peculiar form of Christian faith, which is known by the name of Universalism, is more *perfectly* adapted to his wants than any *other*, I might possibly be charged with dogmatism. Be that as it may, I am bold to affirm that there is no other form in which Christianity has ever been taught, but that the more heartily it is believed, the more unadapted is it to the condition of the believer, and the more incapable of satisfying his wants.

“The views which the doctrine gives of man’s worth and dignity are adapted to his situation. Universalism speaks to man as being the child of God. The doctrine declares there are none all evil; none but that have some good things about them; none but that may be reformed. It tells the sinner that he is precious in the sight of God; that the Father is waiting to receive his prodigal children with open arms; that Jesus is ready to crown them with life and joy; and all that is wanting is a willingness and an exertion on his part to cast off the old man, with his deeds, and to put on the new. And now, where,—and I say it with no invidiousness,—where do we find such views as these, so adapted to our nature and condition? Where is there a system, save Universalism, that recognizes *such* a relationship between God and man?” (48)

“Now, is not Universalism good news? Is it not the blesseddest interpretation ever put upon the gospel of Christ?

Has it a single word to crush out hope in the human heart, or to darken eternity to the dying? Is there any other system of faith, any other doctrine, any other interpretation of Christianity, worthy to be called good news in comparison with it? Is it not glad tidings all through? — the most joyful news that ever came to the soul of dying man? Take the great and solemn questions with which we have to deal, — questions relating to life, death, eternity; to sin and its consequences; to the movements of Providence, and the final results of the government of God and the mission of Jesus, — and which of the two systems, Universalism or that styled Evangelical, so answers these questions as that it is best entitled to be called good news; so answers them as that it best ministers to life's wants and woes; lifts with tenderest hand the burdens from sad and weary hearts; pours clearest light upon dark and awful mysteries; or furnishes needful consolation as we stand above our dead? Which of the two do you think? Is it not true that Universalism alone can fully satisfy — that the mourner wants it — that the dying want it — that every struggling, hungry, perishing soul wants it — to assure them of a Father's love, and of a home and rest beyond the adversities and sorrows of this mortal life? Is it not true that it alone can answer the prayers of the Christian heart? And is it not true, therefore, that it is best entitled to be called good news; that it is really the only good news with reference to the plan of God, the mission of Christ, and the final destiny of all souls?" (144)

“ And the soul, as God has made it, free from selfishness, pride, and prejudice, can be satisfied with nothing short of Universalism; the redemption of our entire race; a whole family saved, not one wanderer lost. This, and this only,

can satisfy the pure desires and heavenly aspirations which God has placed within us. For the great sea of human sympathy and love is like the waters of the peaceful lake; if nothing moves it, it remains quiet. But if, under the bright sunshine of divine truth, some affliction falls upon humanity, then the centre of the great sea is moved, and

“ ‘The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds;
Another still, and still another spreads.
Friend, neighbor, first it will embrace,
Our country next, and next the human race.’

“ Now the sun of divine truth has been shining, and the centre of the sea of human affection has been moved, and the waves have rolled out, and some of them have already encircled the world.

“ Hence we see that Universalism is not only one of the great wants of the world, but that the world is realizing its real wants, and also finding them, and that, too, right fast. The fact is, there is more Universalism in the world than many persons are aware of. It is not confined to the Universalist church, but is found in many of the other churches, and outside of all the churches. But it is from the Universalist church more than any other that the world is being supplied with the streams of salvation, the pure waters of eternal life. And hence we who dwell in this church feel to-day, more than ever, like praising God in the words of the ancient song: ‘Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.’ ” (128)

MAN NATURALLY CRAVES UNIVERSALISM.

“The more receptive humanity of the age craves the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its primitive completeness; and wherever its vital splendor gushes upon the soul, that quickened power, like the sun-lighted lips of Memnon, breaks into music. The springing possibilities of this age, its spiritual longings and its intellectual comprehensiveness, its aspiring philanthropy and its culminating reason, spontaneously crystallize themselves into the faith of Universalism. Universalism is the synonyme of the greatest thought, the divinest virtue, the sublimest hope, the consummate harmony. The discipline of the soul and the culture of the intellect alike culminate in this. For what does Universalism proclaim? It proclaims that God is purposing and working to confer upon the human race the highest spiritual blessing of which they are susceptible, which is immortal holiness and happiness. It proclaims this, because the attributes of God can involve no other issue. He is the Creator of all spirits, and hence responsible for all human existence. He is the Father of all spirits, and hence sustains the most tender relation to mankind. He is characterized by infinite and universal goodness; kind to the unthankful and the evil; no respecter of persons; and this goodness is armed with Almighty power, and exercised in infinite wisdom. This is what nature and revelation, with one voice, declare, and it is what all Christians accept as indisputable truth.

“Universalism is the logical sequence of these fundamental truths, which are rooted in every church. It is not of a nature to demand extraneous evidence. Its best de-

fence is found in its very statement. It is based upon the acknowledged attributes of God; in its process it blends with the order of providence, and with the forces of Christianity; while in its result it presents the perfect fruit of spontaneous love. As it is the nature of the mid-day sun to fill the cope of heaven with light, so it is the nature of the perfect Deity to fill the universe with holiness and joy. Before his effulgent goodness the domain of evil insensibly contracts; man's torpid sensibilities revive and flow; the illusions of ignorance disappear; the fetters of passion break asunder; the tongue of the dumb soul sings; and the humanity that went sobbing out of Eden's gate finds a renovated paradise in all the lands of God." (a)

Let any man reflect for a few moments, and, whatever may be his faith, his heart will *crave* no other doctrine than Universalism, and he can desire nothing more consistent with his own spiritual aspirations. Here he can find all that his soul craves, and no other view of the Gospel can give to it the power of God unto salvation. It must here be understood that we speak of Universalism as it is held by its intelligent advocates, — as it is presented in these pages. (c)

A WANT OF THE HUMAN MIND.

“Universalism reveals to man his destiny beyond the present state of existence. This revelation supplies an inherent want of his soul. I know that some persons maintain that it is enough for us to think of this life, — that we should not trouble ourselves about the future. We have duties indeed to perform here, duties to ourselves, our

fellow-men, and our God. But ought our attention to the performance of these to take away all concern for the future? Shall we labor on like the brute, providing for the present and taking no thought of anything else? We might do so, had we no faculties which ally us to the future. But the very fact that *hope* is implanted in the mind is sufficient to teach us the contrary. This sentiment has to do, not with the present, but the future. It gives man an *interest* in the future as well as the present. And it induces him to look, not merely beyond the present day, the present week, or year, but into the world that succeeds this, and leads him to ask with anxious solicitude, What shall be my condition there?

“In the first place, hope, in answer to this question, tells us that we shall live forever. And one needs this revelation. He looks abroad over the world, and sees evidences of decay on every side,—the leaves fading, the grass withering, the rocks crumbling, ‘the everlasting hills’ wasting away. He enters the social world, and beholds friend after friend departing, severing the strongest ties, and carrying desolation to thousands of hearts. But; amid this universal work of decay, the soul of man feels no symptoms of dissolution. All is firm and enduring here. If a friend departs, he goes not into the dark void of non-existence. He *lives* as much as ever, though beyond the reach of mortal vision. We ourselves are prostrated on the bed of disease and pain. The world seems fast receding from our view. The portals of the tomb are opening, and the future rises in dark and gloomy clouds before us. But the thought never enters our minds that we shall be annihilated. The grave may claim our bodies; this earth may know us no more; but we shall live, in some place,

in some condition of being. There is something within us that tells us we shall still exist, after all material things shall have passed away. This sentiment is uppermost in the mind. All else is subservient to it; nothing can destroy or essentially weaken it. 'We are saved by hope.'

"Secondly; man desires not only life, but a *happy* life. While enduring pains and griefs, he is continually looking forward to brighter skies. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' While surrounded with clouds and darkness, man hopes some time to dwell in fairer climes. This hope is innate and universal in man. You cannot tear it out of his heart. It attends him in joy and sorrow, yea, amid all the circumstances of his existence. He is prompted by it to look forward continually to happiness as 'his being's end and aim.' Look the world over, and you cannot find a man who really expects to be miserable forever. Some may fear that they may be miserable in the future world, for a season; but, while in the possession of their senses, they never entertain the thought that this will last forever. Hope predominates even here, and in plain terms tells them that all will finally be well with them.

"And we have hope not only for ourselves, but our friends. They are not to be cast off forever. We love them too much, God loves them too much, for this. A kind father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, the intimate friend, the sympathizing companion of our joys and sorrows in life, — what! they to be cast off from God, heaven, our society and converse with kindred spirits in the future world! Never! It cannot be! And as all have friends who are to be saved, the final ingathering of all is to be the result. Thus, doubtless all, or nearly all,

secretly cherish the hope that God in some way will continue to have compassion on the whole human race, however polluted by sin they may be. This is confirmed by the fact that many in their old age, after they have had ample time to reflect upon the subject, and view it in the light of reason and experience, confess that they, although professing the orthodox faith, cherish the pleasing hope of the final salvation of all men. Go into almost any of the *other* churches, and you will find persons who indulge this hope. It is natural for man thus to hope, and it is impossible to eradicate it entirely from the human heart. It may, however, be stifled for a season. But it cannot lie forever dormant.” ⁽⁵¹⁾

HOW IT REPRESENTS HUMAN NATURE!

“Man, then, is, as Universalism says, by nature possessed of powers which render him capable of understanding the truth, — of loving and serving God. To these powers the Gospel speaks. He has judgment, and it demands that he should weigh well the truths which God has spoken; he has a heart, and it demands that he should love what is divine; he has a conscience, and it demands that he should acknowledge his obligations to God. Thus Universalism makes man feel that he has the ability to do all that God requires; he has a mind to reason, and a heart to love, and a conscience to bind him to what his judgment approves. And it teaches that if he will but use the means God has furnished for the improvement of his better nature, his soul will be enlarged and perfected; he will walk in the highway of holiness, and rejoice always in the Lord. It teaches him, also, that if he will not use the means of

spiritual culture, — if he will not read the Bible, will not attend church, will not apply the Gospel to his heart, — his appetites and passions shall grow and gain strength till they have acquired supreme power, and his mind is reduced to entire slavery.

“ In this way Universalism makes man feel his responsibilities, feel that he has powers, and is responsible for their right use, — and that it is for him to say whether he will be the Lord’s freeman, or a miserable slave. It does not extend his responsibilities, however, so far as to make man the arbiter of his eternal destiny; for a righteous God would never suspend *infinite* interests upon that which is *finite*. Neither would he subject us to a discipline which he knew it was possible should prove a curse.” (40)

It should be remembered, that, if man is responsible to God, and he must render obedience to him, the Governor of all worlds will see that his laws are made to answer the end for which they were framed; and since they were made for man’s good, he will be blessed by them, though he suffers the penalty attached to them. ‘ Love is the fulfilling of the law,’ and love is of God; and man, to be born again, must love, not only God whom he has disobeyed, but the law itself, which was made for his good. Think, then, if you can, of a system of faith that represents man in a *better* and *truer* light than that form which we cherish, as a denomination. We speak of human nature as it came from the hand of God, and, though made subject to vanity, we are, nevertheless, the children of God, and are destined to enter into the glorious liberty that awaits us in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (c)

UNIVERSALISM AN EVER-ENDURING RELIGION.

"How is it with Universalism? My hope that this shall not share the fate of other religions is based on its rationality. I see that, unless some great calamity shall befall the world, unless God shall visit mankind with wars, pestilence, and famine or destroy the enlightened part of the world by some dread convulsion of nature, universal education will sooner or later prevail. The light of science must shine in the humblest dwelling in the world, and in the path of science rational religion must follow in due time; for it will be seen that reason and revelation must harmonize. Then every doctrine, though it be venerable with the age of a hundred centuries, must endure the questionings of reason, and stand or fall at this tribunal. Have we one that will stand? Faith in God — will this be cast away? This cannot be. For God has set before our eyes, and stamped upon our hearts, too many evidences of his existence, for the world to ever deny it. Will mankind deny God's goodness, and his love for the world? Not while the sun, day by day, the moon, and the glowing stars, night by night, rise and hold their course through the heavens to proclaim this great truth. Not while seed-time and harvest continue. Not while spring sings hope, and autumn answers plenty. Not while the woods and fields echo the music of happy birds and insects. Not while science reads in every law of nature God's determination to bless. No! there is no danger that when the world shall become enlightened, this great doctrine will become discarded. Will the doctrine of immortality be laid aside as one of the fictions that have cheated the

world? It cannot be. Education does not destroy our dread of annihilation, our 'longings after immortality.' Nor does its keen eye discover that our hopes are vain. Mankind will always feel that

" 'There is a world we have not seen,
That wasting time can ne'er destroy;
Where mortal footstep hath not been,
Nor ear hath caught the sound of joy!'" (6)

INSTINCTIVE UNIVERSALISM.

"It is one of the remarkable and peculiar facts furnished in the study of Universalism, that, while the name and dogmatic form are so generally rejected, and sometimes so fiercely denounced, by the church, many of its essential ideas and principles are to be found pervading the opinions, moral effects, and richest experiences of all sects — the vital and most effective elements of all Christian faith, philanthropy, and life. Destroy Universalism, by demonstrating some falsity of its fundamental, and — so far as their definite and harmonious doctrinal statement is concerned — peculiar ideas and principles, and we should see a commotion and hear lamentations such as were never before witnessed in the church. The disciples of the severest and of the most liberal creed would alike mourn the loss of what is most precious in their faith, and, pining especially for that which had been their best helper in weakness and sorrow, they would cry, with Mary, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.' The reforms and charities which are striving to make the world better and happier would be robbed of their basis and their central force. Endeavors after holiness would be

deprived of their chiefest inspirations. And the sweetest repose of believing hearts would be destroyed by the destruction of the assurances of which it is born. A great variety of examples might be adduced to illustrate this ; of one of which we propose now to speak, under the title of *Instinctive Universalism*.

“Let the reader be first advertised, however, of the limitations with which this title is used. Its broadest sense includes far more than we intend. Universalism is a term of wide significance, comprehending, as we believe, the whole sum of known Christian truth in its just proportions and relations. To speak of Instinctive Universalism in the full scope of the words, therefore, would be to intimate that all that Universalism teaches may be found among the instincts or intuitions of our nature. We will not say that, if one should set about the work and sift everything to its last residuum, or, to speak more properly, follow everything down to its ultimate root, this might not be done, so far, at least, as to find germs, or hints, of all the great doctrines of this faith. Certainly, it is among the most demonstrative evidences of these doctrines that they accord so perfectly with the wants, suggestions, and aspirations of the unperverted soul. What is it *behind* these in the nature that wants, suggests, and aspires, with which they accord? This is an important inquiry, but whether, by pushing it, we should come at length, upon instincts, or intuitions, and especially upon the ‘intuitive principles of honor and right,’ and so find it proper to speak of Instinctive Universalism in the most comprehensive sense of the terms, is a question we cannot now pursue.

“Universalism is a system of ideas, distinct in themselves, though a unit as thus adjusted and combined.

Each of these cardinal ideas, considered with respect to its appropriate combinations and its legitimate results, as it is peculiar to Universalism, is wherever, or in whatever other combination, it may be found, a part of the system. So far, therefore, as any one of these ideas is admitted, Universalism is admitted; and if any one of them can be found among the instincts of our nature, *so far* Universalism is *instinctive*, and it is proper to apply the general term to characterize the particular idea. Only in this very limited sense, as applying simply to one of the cardinal ideas of Universalism, are the terms here used.

“It is one of the peculiarities of Universalism that it affirms that God may be implicitly trusted in the government of the universe; trusted not only for the good government of the world on the whole, but by each soul for the good government and ultimate welfare of itself and of every other individual in whose welfare it is concerned. Affirming the final recovery of all, it, of necessity, affirms the safety of each,—not *in* sin, but as implying certain redemption *from* sin. Its word to each is, God is your friend for time and eternity, with respect to every relation, or interest, of your being; have faith in him as such.

“The conclusion to which we are thus led is clear. If there be this radical difference between Universalism and every other hypothesis as to the government of God, and if the trust of any soul in God for itself, or any other, can be really justified only on the supposition that the interests of all are safe in his hands, it follows, of course, that so far as any one exercises such a trust, he adopts one of the essential principles of Universalism. No matter what other, or contrary, opinions he may profess, or whether he be conscious of all that is implied, or not, he does that.

which Universalism alone warrants him to do; that which is altogether assuming and presumptuous, if Universalism be not true.

“ We reiterate, then, the proposition we have labored: that Universalism enters, more or less, into the opinions and experiences of all Christians, usually not even suspected by themselves; that especially, in giving us its peculiar assurances concerning God and the result of his government, it but expresses the instinctive faith of every human heart; and, finally, that it is because of the presence of this faith among their deepest convictions, that those who profess a doctrine which, thoroughly believed, would clothe the universe in the sackcloth of despair, are yet able to be as undisturbed and cheerful as they are. Universalism alone is the faith which men can cherish, growing ever stronger and happier as they know it better and believe it more devoutly; the faith, in the spirit of which alone can life be pleasant, friendship sweet, or existence really endurable, and whose thoughts and assurances serve, though it may be unknown, as the elements of beauty and joy in every soul. God be praised that not only does it thus exist in the instinctive faith of souls, but that it is becoming more and more widely incorporated into the professed faith of the church, and that it is destined yet to fill the world with the abundant fruits of its benignant power.” (4)

UNIVERSALISM THE DEMAND OF THE AGE.

“ It is our purpose, in this article, to notice one tendency of the age towards Universalism, — the social. By Universalism we understand the acknowledgment of love as the highest principle in the moral universe. All our distinctive

tenets are but the results of this divine law. 'God is love;' therefore he created man for a noble destiny, making all labor, sorrow, and retribution, disciplinary. So must the influences of his providence be adequate to the accomplishment of the end proposed. Love is the only moral power in the universe; therefore it must be sufficient to overcome all sin. It is the highest state of the soul, the only condition upon which its faculties can act harmoniously; therefore it must be the last result of all religious culture. A living faith in this principle, as means and end in the progressive training of man, entitles any one to our denominational name. We believe that society is tending to this centre of all true civilization; that literature is imbibing more of its spirit; and that the iron theology of the past age is slowly unclenching its grasp upon mankind, and losing its strength before this subduing power. . . .

"We are astonished to hear the great doctrines of human capacity and regeneration so eloquently vindicated in temperance and anti-slavery lectures, by men who, in their pulpits, cannot go beyond the catechism! We marvel not at this freshness of zeal. . . . Are not our souls refreshed when they can break from the revival, the anxious-seats, and the church-meeting, into the lecture-room? Is not the eloquence of the warm heart better than the cant of the synagogue? Is it not, after all, a glorious thing to trust in man's native goodness, and win him by love to virtue? Do not resist this new impulse. It is an inspiration from the 'Holy Spirit.' Do not stop to ask how it agrees with the creeds, for you will be astonished at the difference; but go on, and by and by you will look back with pity upon the artificial system you miscalled Christianity. This fact, alone, proves that the world is

tending to faith in love, to Universalism. The great soul of humanity must renew itself. It cannot always lie under the mountains piled upon it. Like imprisoned lava, it must rush out, though it be for desolation. Thank God! in our day, like an awakened giant, it has slain its task-masters, and wrought with mighty energies in the service of humanity. . . .

"It would be interesting to trace this reform spirit in its results upon legislation and life; but the completeness of our subject does not demand it. We have shown the ideas implied in the movement, and their inconsistency with the popular theology. No one can doubt whither we are tending. The central truth of Universalism is the central truth of the age; and it must pass into our social and political existence, or we can have no hope for the future." (28)

UNIVERSALISM EIGHTEEN HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

"One hundred years since the great idea that there is one God, the Father of all; that he is no respecter of persons; that every human soul is precious in his sight; that there is one heaven, toward which we are all tending, for he has created of one blood all the earth. A hundred years since this great idea was brought to these shores; since the Universalist denomination advocated the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. One hundred years since that idea was incorporated in a republican government; since the declaration that 'we hold it a self-evident truth that all beings are created free and equal, and are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' One hundred years since this denomination has been moving onward and working to the great comfort and joy and hope

of human souls. But don't think that the idea originated one hundred years ago. *Universalism is eighteen hundred years old.* It was preached first when, through prophet and priest, it was declared that Christ came, our common Messiah, to break fetters and undo burdens. It was preached when Christ revealed himself first of all to the despised Samaritan woman, with whom the Jews had no dealings; when he went among the lowly; when of old it was declared that the prodigal should be not only welcomed back, but that the father should meet him half way. It was preached when Paul said that in this new dispensation there should be neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female. Through all the years from that day to this, Universalism has been advancing in the world. It has been gradually lifting up the down-trodden, enlightening the ignorant, and setting free the oppressed. Before Jesus of Nazareth came there were multitudes held in bondage, despised; no effort was made to lift or instruct them. Philosophy did nothing for them. The wise men of all time spoke a culture and philosophy that was beautiful, but it did nothing for the masses of the ignorant and oppressed:

“It was for Jesus of Nazareth to preach that Gospel which should lift the lowly, enlighten the ignorant, redeem the sinful, and at last bring them home, reconciled, to the Father. Slowly the work of lifting the masses has been going on. It was a long time before this great idea could be incorporated into a government. At last it was incorporated in a religious denomination. Since that time how rapidly we have been going on! What changes have been wrought in the condition of the humbler classes! They have looked to Christ and found that emancipation which they needed. Multitudes have been blessed by this faith

of ours. To many a poor soldier, dying on the battle-field, has the whisper of God's love brought peace and blessing. To many a poor woman in her desolate home, thinking of absent ones on distant battle-fields, has there come a blessed peace as she thought that God is love, and does not cast off the dear ones, even though they sin.

"We cannot measure the influence of our faith by the number of churches and communicants and ministers. If we could see how many have been lifted up we might judge something of it. As we see old creeds tottering, explained away by new interpretations, as we see men breaking away from old churches and rejoicing in God's love, we can estimate a little of the good that has been done. We are to look at the advance of all republican institutions as in some part the result of these same ideas which lie at the bottom of our denomination. We do not know how much Universalism had to do with the freeing of four millions of slaves; but the Gospel of liberty preached by Garrison and Phillips is founded on these same ideas,—the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and a common heaven for all. It was Universalism applied to politics. We cannot say how much it has done for woman's cause. Every human soul is precious in the sight of God,—black or white, man or woman. This idea lies at the bottom of the movement for woman's elevation. I rejoice to see that in our denomination we are living out our faith." (85)

PART V.

UNIVERSALISM AS A SENTIMENT.

WHAT UNIVERSALISM TEACHES.

IN this part of our work — having defined elsewhere what Universalism is as a doctrine — we shall give a more detailed account of the belief entertained in our church. We have not the room, nor is it necessary, to give every individual opinion. The selections here presented will give an idea as to our *general* belief, so far as the fundamental principles of our faith are concerned. There may be a sameness in what is here offered; and yet it is a *necessity*, rather than otherwise. It is not an error; for, the more familiar we become with the teachings of our blessed faith, the stronger will be our attachment to the cause we have espoused, and the better advocates we shall become in defence of the Gospel. (c)

The following remarks are from the pen of one whose long editorial life enabled him to judge correctly as to what we teach: —

“1. Universalism teaches that the sins of finite men deserve finite punishment, or punishment as long as sin continues; that punishment is not an *end*, but one *means* to an end, — obedience.

“2. Universalism teaches that God is the *Friend* of all mankind, and not being *satisfied* to allow his creatures

to remain in sin and unreconciliation, he sent his Son into the world, not to reconcile himself to sinners, — not to suffer as a vicar or substitute, the penalty of the law, in the place of sinners, — but to enlighten their minds, and warm and purify their hearts by his truth, his Holy Spirit, and the influence of his pure example. He does not save any from justice, but influences all to become just in themselves, and obedient to the divine law. If he saves all from sin, it follows that punishment for sin will end. Dry up the fountain, and the stream will cease to flow. Sin and punishment bear the relation of antecedent and consequent, of cause and effect, to each other.

“3. When the sinner ceases to sin, and becomes obedient to the law, righteous or holy, he deserves no more punishment on account of past sins. To punish him more would be retaliation or revenge.

“4. The salvation of sinners is by the *grace* of God ; but salvation does not consist in the deliverance of the soul from deserved punishment, but in deliverance from sin, ignorance, error, unbelief, and condemnation, into a state of obedience, faith, knowledge, holiness, and spiritual life. Grace moved God to devise and use the means of enlightening, educating, regenerating, and purifying the minds and hearts of men. Grace invites and persuades the prodigal to return home. It goes out after him, with a mission of mercy in its hands. It receives him kindly when he returns, and, forgiving or overlooking all his sins, loves him freely as if he had never sinned.

“5. Universalism teaches that the true Christian idea of the *atonement* of Christ is expressed in the text, ‘God was in Christ *reconciling* the world of mankind unto himself.’ Divine grace sent the Saviour to do his work. God

filled him with his Holy Spirit. All the sufferings of Christ, all the persecutions he endured, were *incidental* to his work of reconciling sinners to God. He devoted and sacrificed himself to the work of saving the world from error and sin. This gracious, benevolent work cost him the sacrifice of his life, and the Father and the Son both knew, before he commenced his mission, that it would cost him this sacrifice. Still 'God so loved the sinful world,' that he sent his beloved Son to save it, knowing all the suffering it would cost him to fulfil this mission of love and mercy. He did not send his Son to propitiate his wrath, or remove his enmity to sinners, because God always loved them with a love of benevolence, though he did not love their sins or wicked characters. He was not satisfied to allow them to remain in wickedness, so he sent his Son, and filled that Son with his own Spirit, in order to take away their wicked characters, and make them righteous, pure, and holy.

"6. Universalism teaches that mankind are not 'probationers for eternity,' in the sense in which Partialism teaches, but that men are in a *disciplinary* state, — all are under a gracious training to bring them to final reconciliation to God, and obedience to the divine law. The principles of the divine government being immutable, this administration of treating sinners *as* they deserve, and also to more than they deserve or merit, is to continue until it accomplishes the object which God aims to accomplish, — the universal harmony and happiness of all souls." (3)

WHAT UNIVERSALISTS BELIEVE !

“There is no product of human skill more imposing than a splendid temple. The attraction does not lie simply in its massive proportions, its symmetry of parts, its grandeur as a whole, nor in the beauty of its adornments ; but there is a transcending charm in the purpose for which it was built,—the religious aim which is expressed by its walls and towers. Man may be allowed to build grandly when he builds for God ; and many times has the hyperbole of the poet had much truth in it where he says of the builder : —

“ ‘ He builded better than he knew ;
The conscious stone to beauty grew.’

“This was true of the early Christians in reference to their religious faith and efforts. A favorite metaphor with St. Paul was that of a grand temple, of which every Christian was a part, as a living stone, builded together for a habitation of the Spirit.

“To this end let us build the grand structure of Christian character, stimulated by the grand ideas of the unity of God, the unity of Christ, the unity of the race, the unity of redemption, forming the Universalism of God. ‘God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.’ What a clear shining after the rain will that be ! What ‘a rainbow round about the throne’ ! ‘Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.’

“We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected. This gives no countenance to the idea

of men being saved in their sins, or going to heaven in their sins. All Universalists unite in the recognition of the essential need of holiness as the prerequisite to salvation or happiness; and when we are permitted to state our belief, we always define it as 'the final holiness and happiness of all mankind.' So eager are many of us to keep the idea of holiness prominent, that the definition always is the final holiness and *consequent* happiness of all mankind. It is thus that we arrive at the great truth which is the splendor of the moral universe.

"This implies that we believe in a future life; and so we do. We believe in the resurrection of the dead 'by the power of God, by the glory of the Father,' as Christ was raised. That power of God, that glory of the Father, implies the continued providence of the Almighty, and we stand apart and distinguished from every other order of Christians by the fact, that we maintain that the fatherly providence of God is stretched over all worlds, affording opportunities for improvement to every soul, securing, by truth, motives, and love, in the grand issue, the holiness and blessedness of humanity." (20)

REASONS FOR PREACHING UNIVERSALISM.

"How often is the question asked, 'If Universalism is true, where is the use of preaching it?' This question has frequently been ably answered in our periodicals; but, as they are constantly falling under the eyes of those who never saw them before, and as even our friends feel a lively interest in everything which relates to the promulgation of the truth, the writer has thought it might not be

altogether unprofitable for him to give some reasons why Universalism should be preached.

“And, in the first place, Universalism should be preached, *because it is true*. If it were not true, we confess it ought not to be preached; but to admit its truth, and then ask why we preach it, is manifestly absurd. A doctrine that is false never should be proclaimed; for it can do no good, and mankind should not be taught to believe what is untrue; but certainly the truth which God has revealed to man by his holy prophets, by his own dear Son and chosen apostles,—this should be preached faithfully and zealously, preached *because it is true*. The question, then, carries with it its own answer. ‘If Universalism is true, where is the use of preaching it?’ The question is based on the admission of its truth; and, if it is true, nothing can be more evident than that it must be useful to preach it; for the truth is always useful. But, aside from this admission, which will not generally be allowed, we have abundant evidence that our doctrine is true. The great and glorious consummation which it contemplates is according to the will of God. ‘He will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’ So says the Apostle Paul, who also informs us that ‘God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.’ This is Universalism, plain as can be expressed. God will have all men to be saved; and he ‘worketh all things after his own will.’ What can be clearer than this? . . .

“The tendency of Universalism is to lead mankind to love and serve God. Here is a good reason, were there none other, for preaching Universalism. It is the power of God unto salvation.’ (74)

An author, in his autobiography, has answered the question before us, in the form of a dialogue. A fellow-traveller questioned the utility of preaching the doctrine *if it is true*. Mr. T. asks him, "Have you a family?" The answer is given: "A wife and two children; and I expect to meet them to-night."—"What is the *use* of that expectation?" says Mr. T. The reply is made, "It makes me very happy, and that is *use* enough."

"Truly; and yet you can see no *use* in preaching, or believing that we shall meet a ransomed, universal family in heaven. Let us suppose that yonder approaching horseman should stop the stage, and inform you that your house was burned last night, and that your wife and children are believed to have been consumed. How would you feel?'—'Awfully,' in reply. 'Why do you ask me such a question?'—'And suppose another horseman should immediately follow, having a message from your father, that your wife and children are perfectly safe and happy in his house. Would there be no use in delivering the message?'

"Why do you ask me such a question?' said my fellow-passenger. 'He ought to tell me forthwith.'—'What difference would it make? You would ascertain their safety when you arrived at your home, and your present knowledge would not alter the fact. What difference could it make?'

"Ah, I see what you are at! There would be a vast difference in my feelings on the journey home.' And you have answered the question, 'If Universalism be true, what is the *use* of preaching or believing it?' " (75)

SHALL WE CEASE PREACHING UNIVERSALISM ?

We might add much to the following selection, from one who blew the trumpet on the walls of our spiritual Zion for many years, and whose name was widely known ; for the position he occupied, as an editor, made him familiar to those who never saw his face.

“ There seems to be a disposition on the part of some persons, to induce Universalists to cease preaching Universalism. We are told that this is the principal obstacle to a union between Universalists and other liberal sects. If we would permit the doctrine of Universalism to sink, as it were, out of sight, and dwell principally on the moral precepts of the Gospel, it is thought that a union might soon be formed between Universalists and Unitarians. It is said, that already the preaching of Universalists has undergone quite a change ; that some of them now preach that salvation is conditional ; that they imitate other sects, especially Unitarians, in the composition and style of their sermons, and the manner of their delivery ; and that this kind of preaching is increasing among us. It is further affirmed, that there are some who profess to be Universalists, who would not be known to be so from their preaching, and who would not be so considered were it not for their public connection with Universalists. Whether these remarks are just, or unjust, we shall leave to the reader to determine, for he probably has as good opportunity to form a just opinion in these matters as we have.

“ Our intention in this article is to show that, whatever may happen in the future, the time has not yet come when we may properly abandon the doctrine of Universalism.

By Universalism, we mean no particular form of it; but the *plain, old-fashioned* doctrine that God is the Father of all men; that they are all in his hands; that their destiny is cared for by him; and that he is training them *all* to know him, love him, and serve him forever. In plain words, it is the doctrine of the *reconciliation of all things to God*.

“Why, then, we ask, should the preaching of Universalism be abandoned? In our estimation it is a great and important doctrine. One of two things we are sure of (we take no middle ground in this matter), namely, either the doctrine referred to is a great and glorious doctrine, or else it is a great and pernicious error. If a man affirms that the doctrine is false, that is a sufficient reason why *he* should not preach it. But if it be not an error, it is a truth; and if it be a truth, it is a most important truth; no doctrine can be more important. And why is it important? 1. It is necessary to the vindication of the divine character in the permission of sin. Sin does exist. We know it. There are, in this world, pain, and sin, and sorrow, and tears. This imperfection is allowed to exist by the Supreme. He either employs it as a means of good to all who suffer, or else he rests in it *as an end*. If the latter, he is unquestionably malignant, and that we cannot admit. If he employs it as a means of good to all who suffer, then Universalism must ensue. If the doctrine of endless punishment were true, in all those cases in which sin had such a result, it would be rested in *as an end*; and none but a malignant being would rest in such an end. Universalism, then, is necessary to the vindication of the divine character. If it be necessary to vindicate the divine character to the judgments of men; if it be neces-

sary to 'sanctify the Lord God in their hearts,' then is it necessary to preach Universalism." (3)

Cease preaching the doctrine! No, *never!* for it is God's great truth which Christ came to bear witness unto. He died and rose again from the dead, that he might infuse *new* life into his chosen disciples, and thus enable them to go forth and declare the whole counsel of God. Universalism announces a glorious truth, *absolute* and *reliable*. And here is the hiding of its power. This truth is man's immortality, and a divine life in Christ. Take this away, and you remove the tower of its hope. If the day shall ever come when it shall cease to utter this truth, its glory will depart, and if its ministry shall turn from this, it will lose the right arm of its power. God forbid that we ever cease to proclaim the whole truth in relation to the world's happy destiny.

We give the following from the editor of the Connecticut department of the "Trumpet," for 1861. It has the right ring to it, and may the like be often said of our conventions. (c)

"The sermons delivered before our State convention, at its late meeting in Middletown, were all, without exception, imbued with the spirit and doctrine of Universalism. There seemed to be no disposition on the part of any speaker to keep the doctrine in the background, or make it secondary to any other consideration. True, the chief labor of each preacher was not to simply prove by textual quotations that the whole world will be eventually saved, and there leave the subject; but this important truth was the foundation, the underlying structure, upon which was erected the comely fabric of every sermon. The attentive hearer was enabled to see Universalism as the truth of God,

—the precious burden of the Gospel,—the light that shone in the teachings of the Saviour, and the crowning excellency of the Scriptures; and, growing out of this sublime divinity, a broader charity, a higher morality, and a purer spirituality than the world had ever known.

“He could see the tree of life with its healing leaves and golden fruits; doctrine and duty, precept and practice, should be inseparable. This is the kind of teaching that the world needs to make it better, and we ardently pray that the preachers of our denomination may earnestly and faithfully contribute their full share in supplying this moral, religious, and spiritual necessity of the people.” (124)

UNIVERSALISM AN EVANGELICAL RELIGION.

“Is there anything in Universalism unfavorable to an evangelical religion? By an ‘evangelical’ religion, we mean a religion that has *heart* in it, in contradistinction to a mere theoretical religion, which has only to do with the head; or a system of morality which is concerned chiefly in regulating the exterior deportment. We do *not* mean by it a state of feeling warmed into hot life by the fires of hell, which makes the subject more frantic and fanatical than rational and sober. That religion which is the offspring of slavish fear, rather than of divine love and holy hope in the soul, is not such a religion as the Gospel requires, or God will approve. There is nothing ‘evangelical’ in it. The very word signifies something relating to *goodness*,—to the good news of great joy,—of a great joy that shall be unto all people. Nothing inconsistent with this can be truly called evangelical. As opposite as

the 'news' of the endless misery of a large part of mankind is to the tidings of the final salvation of all men, so opposite is modern partialism to the evangelical faith and hope of the Gospel.

"The Gospel has a religion,—it is an evangelical religion,—a religion, not relating to the outward deportment only, not of the head merely; but a religion of the heart, taking deep and abiding hold of all the vital elements of the seat of life in the soul,—a religion that begins in the heart of the believer, as a seed of holiness that diffuses its sanctifying power over the whole inner man, and causes him truly to love God supremely, and with a love that makes it his delight to do his will. This is what we call '*evangelical religion.*'" (78)

A very clear and forcible article has been written on this subject, by a late writer, but we have room for only a few extracts:—

"There are among us certain Christian sects who appropriate to themselves, and deny to others, the title '*evangelical*,' thus attempting to monopolize this epithet. They appreciate the value of a good name, whether it is or is not descriptive of the thing to which it is applied. By their peculiar use of this title, they say, '*We only are evangelical, the only people who have any right to be called Christians. Others claim to be Christians; but not being evangelical, we cannot admit their claim.*' They do not put their assumptions in this form of words, but this is precisely its meaning.

"We have thought it necessary to show why *certain* prominent articles of theology do not furnish the distinguishing test between those who claim to be evangelical and those to whom they deny that title, so that the real

distinction might become the more conspicuous. Endless punishment is the *master* word in this enigma. To believe in future punishment is not enough; to be evangelical, in the modern sense of the word, one must believe in punishment strictly endless. To admit a possible release or mitigation, after untold millions of ages, would forfeit the claim. This is the one point of doctrine in which all the evangelical sects agree; and they are equally unanimous in withholding this title from all who reject this doctrine. This fully answers the conditions in the case. Those who accept this are evangelical; those who do not, are not evangelical. And when they say that we are not evangelical, they mean that we are not really Christian in any sense; that we do not believe the Gospel.

“Now, the word evangelical is one of the best of words; but it is liable to be perverted; and then, like every other perverted blessing, it becomes very bad. The perversion of this word is used as a stigma and reproach upon those Christians who, seeking honestly and devoutly, do not find the doctrine of endless perdition taught in the Scriptures. Because Universalists do not find that doctrine in the Bible, they insist that we are not evangelical,—that is, that we are not Christians,—thus perverting this word to a base and ignoble service.” (77)

“Several of the churches or sects are fond of taking to themselves certain names, and of asserting a superior claim to them. Once they were orthodox, but now, since orthodoxy is anybody’s doxy, they call themselves evangelical. What does this word mean? The once-called orthodox sects are in a quandary over this question. They have styled themselves evangelical as though they had a special, a divine warrant for it; and their members have sometimes

vaunted themselves on the exclusive privilege of wearing it, as though it were a letters-patent or a royal decree erecting them into a religious aristocracy ; and yet what meaning it has, or ought to have, — precisely how many it embraces, and how many it excludes, — they cannot tell. Of one thing, however, they seem to be absolutely certain : Universalists are not evangelical Christians. But why are we not evangelical ? We cannot see why, unless it is because our faith is too broad, liberal, and generous ; because it has too much love and good will in it ; because it makes God too good, Christ too successful, and heaven too populous. Still, this can hardly be the reason. For do not our good brethren know that the name they have assumed, and which they deny to us, comes from a word that signifies good news, glad tidings ? An evangelist is a preacher of good news. Evangelical doctrines are those which contain good news ; and evangelical Christians are they who hold these doctrines, and rejoice in them and conform their lives to them.

“ As those doctrines are nearest evangelical that have most love, joy, rest, and consolation in them, that come nearest to expressing what was in the mind and heart of Jesus, so those men and women are most nearly evangelical Christians who have most of Christ in them ; who drink deepest of the spirit of his religion ; who are the most loving, catholic, and humane ; whose lives best illustrate the golden rule, and whose souls every day are standing upon the mount of some new and more glorious transfiguration. ‘ By this,’ said the divine Master, ‘ shall all men know that ye are my disciples : if ye love one another.’ It is not by our creed alone, not by the professions we make, not by the ceremonials in which we participate, not by the church

in which we worship, not by the sectarian name we bear, that we shall be known as the disciples of Christ. Not by the soil in which it is planted, not by the stock into which it is grafted, not by the blossoms with which it adorns itself in the spring-time, not by any high-sounding name given it, is a tree known, but by its fruit. So the test of discipleship, of whether we are evangelical Christians, is in the fruit of the heart and life. Let us all keep our denominational names, and adhere to our denominational methods of labor, and love our own church the best; but let us all be evangelical Christians by loving one another, and making ourselves by our united labors in the gospel field, our kindly ministries among the poor and wretched, the friends and benefactors of our fellow-men." (144)

UNIVERSALISM MISREPRESENTED.

There is probably nothing more frequently misrepresented than the views of Universalists. It is for this reason that we introduce *this* section, and the *following* on objections to Universalism, into this division of our work, that it may be seen what are our views in detail when corrected of their misrepresentations.

"It is really very amusing to listen to the attacks of the opposing preachers upon Universalism, for not two in fifty give it a fair representation; but they seem generally to wish to carry the idea to their hearers that the doctrine embraces almost anything that is absurd and ridiculous. Let us give a few examples:—

"Nothing is more common than to hear them say that Universalists believe in no punishment for sin; and their hearers, seizing the notion as most excellent, fail not to

extend it far and wide. Many of them honestly think that it is correct. But an objection so utterly false we are almost tired of answering. Universalism is the only sentiment in the world that teaches certain punishment for sin. While all others allow the sinner to go free by repentance, this teaches that 'God will by *no means* clear the guilty.' Repentance itself will not save him from the just penalty of law. It will save him from sin, but not from its punishment for sins committed. Such, therefore, as misrepresent us ought to go and learn of the wise man: 'He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.'

"Again, how frequently it is repeated that we believe in no hell; and the question is often sagely asked, What was hell made for? Who, in all the world, ever heard a Universalist say there is no hell? Such a sentiment was never put forth by one; never was heard from our pulpits; never read in any of our works. Where, then, is its foundation? and with what show of justice can our opposers persist in giving it circulation?

" 'Alas! alas!' they reply, 'you do not believe in an endless hell.' Very true, indeed, and we should be pleased to know where that doctrine is found, save in the creeds of men? Good brethren, the phrases, endless hell and eternal hell, are nowhere recorded in the Bible, — the very best reason in the world why we should not advocate it. We have no desire to be wise above what is written; but if we should ever obtain that desire, we shall probably make it manifest by adopting the creed of endless misery.

"They say Universalists disbelieve in a *change of heart*, — conversion, regeneration, the new birth. If they mean by these phrases a change of opinions, a reformation of

life and manners, a 'ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well,' possessing faith in Christ, and a hope of immortal life, we do *not* reject conversion, the new birth, etc. But if they mean such a *radical* change of heart or nature, supernaturally and mysteriously effected, as they generally pretend; that they are not liable to sin, and do not sin, we do deny the truth of the doctrine; for the simple and most conclusive reason, that we never saw, heard, nor read of, such a man in this world,—a man who was not liable to the influences of temptation, and who never sinned, after his conversion. This one fact is enough to demonstrate the unsoundness of the doctrine as *thus expressed.*" (19)

"It is said, Universalism must be false, because it *denies the necessity of repentance and conversion.* A gentleman, not long since, remarked that Universalists could not be saved unless they repented. I replied, True; very true. And can any be saved without repentance? Can Baptists, or Methodists, or Calvinists? His answer was, No! Then I asked wherein they stood on better ground than that we occupy. Repentance is a means by which all men are brought into the enjoyment of religion, and we do not expect any man will be saved while he continues in sin. The reason why we hold to universal salvation is, we expect all men will repent. We do not believe the doctrine of endless impenitence. Instead, therefore, of denying repentance, we hold to it more than any others; we hold to the universality of this work, while others hold that it extends to only a few. This is the great point of difference between us and all limitarians. And when all shall have been converted, turned from evil, and filled with love, the work of human redemption will be complete. This is Universalism. We hold, then, more than any others to

conversion; we hold that all men will be converted. We cannot see why God should set bounds to a work so important as that of turning men from sin; why he should say to it, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.' He has set no such bounds, but has declared that 'every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'" (40)

We should remember that it is the goodness of the Lord that leadeth to repentance; and that those who *believe* in Christ, and *love* God, experience the *new* birth, — pass from death unto life, and become partakers of the divine nature. They receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and become new creatures in Christ. This is what Universalism has always taught; and those who understand these facts will not bear false witness against us, nor misrepresent "the faith once delivered to the saints." (c)

THE OBJECTIONS TO UNIVERSALISM.

Many of the objections to Universalism are not founded in fact; they are not philosophically presented; they do not *actually* exist. For instance, a formidable objection is this: "If all are going to heaven, heaven will be no place for us, the righteous; or, how can the wicked be happy in the society of the righteous hereafter, any more than on earth?" It is generally presented in these words: "*If all men are going to heaven, I have no desire to go myself.*"

Notwithstanding we have always taught that no one can enter heaven without being saved and made holy, still this question is raised: How can the wicked be happy in such a place? (c)

An able writer, in discussing this matter, has well observed: "In all this complaining of Universalism, because it contends that even the worst of sinners will be saved, there is, somehow, the idea carried along with it, that men are to sustain the same character in the future world that they do here; that we believe that the profligate, the criminal, and all the host of vicious characters are going to heaven with all their sins and iniquities about them. It is some vague notion of this character that undoubtedly lies at the bottom of the objection.

"But people ought to know better than this; and there is no excuse for them if they do not. Enough has been preached and written on the subject of Universalism a thousand times over to show them that it embraces no such absurdities as this; and, if they will not hear, or read upon the subject, they have no right whatever to speak of it as they do. No man ever heard a Universalist, of common sense and common honesty, advance a sentiment of this character. We utterly and totally abjure it as one of the most monstrous absurdities ever conceived. Why not talk of curing a sick man, and leave his disease still raging in all its power? There would be just as much sense and propriety in it as to talk of mankind as being saved, and still remaining sinners. It is equally as rational to talk of saving a man from burning, by taking him out of one fire and putting him into another, as to talk of saving the sinner by taking him from a sinful condition here and placing him in a sinful condition hereafter." (78)

"I became a Universalist by making myself acquainted, to some considerable extent, with the system. It is altogether unreasonable to suppose that one would embrace Universalism without understanding the system of uni-

versal salvation. But, whilst persons are not likely to embrace a system which they do not understand, and against which they are prejudiced, it does sometimes happen they are found opposing that about which they have but a very superficial knowledge. Thus it was with the writer. I opposed Universalism, not knowing what Universalism was. I knew that Universalists believed in the salvation of all men, but I was alike ignorant of the system and its evidences; and I labored under this ignorance until I examined, in connection with the Bible, a few books written by Universalists; and, having examined these works, I was led to believe that those men, who had written in opposition to the doctrine, whose works I had read, either did not understand the system which they opposed, or were afraid to set it forth; for I do not believe that the system of Universalism can be learned from any of the works in opposition to it that I have ever read. When a man undertakes to overthrow a system which he really believes to be false, he ought first to place that system upon its strongest props, give it all the strength which its friends are able to give it, and when he overthrows it, it is overthrown. And whenever I see Universalism overthrown in this way, with all my heart I will reject it.

“I have stated that I became a Universalist by studying the system and its evidences. I wish it, however, to be understood, that I did not enter upon the study of Universalism with either the desire or least apprehension that I would find it true. On the contrary, I believed that the system was false, that its foundation was upon the sand; and my only object in studying it was to learn its weakness, and furnish myself with arguments for a renewed opposition. But instead of finding Universalism built

upon the sand, I found that it had for its foundation the rock of eternal truth. And as that rock is immovable, the system which it supports must also be immovable; consequently every assault made against it will be only as the waves of the sea, fated to perish as they dash against the majestic rock in the bosom of old ocean." (120)

CHRIST AS A PREACHER.

"A great deal is said, among all Christian sects, about the necessity of *doctrinal* preaching; and if this term is rightly understood, we see nothing objectionable in it. Doctrinal preaching is very important, and Jesus himself was a doctrinal preacher. But it will assist us much in the comprehension of this subject, if we examine a little the character of Christ's preaching, and see how and in what way he was a doctrinal preacher. We ask our readers, then, to look over the biographies of Christ, to examine them *thoroughly*, and see if they can find a single expression which countenances the popular doctrine of the trinity.

"But what did Christ preach of God? *His* doctrine was that of the *fatherhood* of God. He announces him as 'THE FATHER.' And this is what the world wants. There is enough in this doctrine to save and redeem it. If we would come to God as children, we should learn to love him as a Father; and the alienation of human hearts arises from ignorance of God's paternal character, — an ignorance resulting from the lowness of their lives. The doctrine of God, then, is the doctrine of his fatherhood; and if all Christian preachers would follow Christ, and preach God as a Father, and set aside entirely the absurd

and irrational dogma of the trinity, infinitely better would it be for all.

“But look again at the preaching of Christ. What doctrine did he teach concerning man? He certainly did not consider him an angel, — a saint. He regarded him as a sinner, — a poor, deceived, sinful being! He regarded him as lost, — lost like the sheep that has strayed from its fold. And he came ‘to seek and to save that which was lost,’ — ‘to save sinners.’ Christ preached repentance, conversion, and a new, *spiritual* life. Look through his sermons, and how pointed they are! What terrible rebukes of sin! How he plies his pungent reasonings, striking at the root of all moral evil, — aiming at the *heart*, and demanding its purity, as the only true life! ‘Blessed,’ he says, ‘are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’ The doctrine which Christ preached was repentance of sin; a thorough, radical breaking off from all that is evil; a complete renovation of the spiritual nature, — lifting the heart up to God, and filling it with the love of duty and holiness.

“And this is the doctrine for Christ’s ministers to preach: ‘Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.’ No preaching is truly Christian which does not insist upon the necessity of repentance and the necessity of conversion. That Christ preached thus is too clear to admit of dispute. His great theme was, ‘Repent!’ And this is the only way of life. This is sound doctrinal preaching.

“Of the future, Christ taught immortality; but in what way? He said, ‘I am the resurrection and the life.’ Man is immortal in his constitution. But immortality is one thing — *life* is another. What the Bible calls ‘eternal life,’ we can enjoy only through Christ, through faith, and holy

living. If there is anything clear to us, it is that 'in Christ is life,' and that life is 'the light of man.' He says, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' Our Christian life hangs on Christ; it is absolutely dependent on him; and without him we have not life. We could quote more than a hundred passages involving this idea; and to us it is vital. Christ *alone*, under God, is man's Saviour. 'There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ.' Christ, and Christ alone, is the Saviour of the world. We are not saved out of Christ; we are saved only in him. If we do not mistake the teachings of Jesus, — and we have studied them diligently, prayerfully, for years, — *life is in him*, and, for us to enjoy it, we must put on Christ. Here, then, is another point of Christian doctrine. All men are immortal; but, because immortal, does it follow that they are to enjoy eternal life *without* Christ? We do not so understand his teachings. Christ gives life, and Christ alone; and if we would enjoy 'eternal life,' it must be in and through Christ. His doctrine is, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' And if we will not come unto him we cannot have life. We believe that all will, at last, be brought under the influence of the Gospel of Christ, and hence enjoy life. But this will not be unless we have faith. This is the one indispensable condition; and we shall be left to feel the pangs of hunger, until we are ready to come, and say, 'Here am I, give me life.'

"We regard this as doctrinal preaching. It is, to us, *Universalism*. We want to see these doctrines taught plainly, — preached everywhere, from every Christian pulpit. We want, not creeds, but doctrines; not human in-

ventions, but Christ's blessed words. We want such preaching as runs all through the histories of Christ,—clear, pointed, doctrinal preaching; preaching which reaches the souls of men, and stirs them up, and makes them feel; preaching which produces repentance, conversion, which leads to the new life,—that life which is hid in Christ Jesus.” (61)

THE CHANGES IN UNIVERSALISM.

We have thought best to note the changes and transitions of Universalism under the division of the doctrine as a sentiment, because it most properly belongs here. And we trust no one will fail to read it carefully. It embraces all that need to be said in a work like this, and will give satisfaction to all classes, and teach us how the subject stands, and the hopes before us, as to a *unity* of faith in the modes and operations by which the great salvation will be wrought out.

We commence our selections from an article written for the “Universalist Quarterly,” for January, 1849. (c)

“The doctrine of the final salvation of all men from sin and its consequences, appears to have been believed by some in almost every age from the fathers of the church to the present time. This doctrine, however, has been presented under different phases at different times; it has received modifications which its early promulgators never anticipated, and has passed through some changes which probably most persons of reflection will be inclined to consider as improvements of the original system. Nor ought these modifications and changes to excite surprise, or to incur censure. Every reader of ecclesiastical history, every

attentive observer of the operations of the human mind, when religion is the special subject of its regard, knows that the dogmatic theology, in every denomination, has been marked with similar mutations. Who, that has reached the age of seventy-five or eighty years, is ignorant of the fact, that what is now called Calvinism is not the scheme of divinity which bore the name when he was a young man? Who, that reflects upon the subject, does not perceive that the preaching which he hears, and the books that he reads, though they bear the name of orthodox, are of a milder character than those which were heard and read, at the beginning of the present century? And it is right that changes in men's religious views should take place; as without them there could be no growth, no improvement. It is true, that every change is not, necessarily, an improvement; but it is equally true, that where no modification of original views, no enlargement of mind, or no change in early habits of thought, occurs, there can be no advancement in knowledge.

“That the mind of man is capable of enlargement; that its perception of truth may acquire clearness and strength by continued exercise; and that we may advance in the knowledge of any subject of our consideration, in proportion as we study it minutely and extensively, — these are facts, that few, if any, will feel disposed to deny. They will certainly be admitted in all scientific concerns; and we can conceive no sufficient reason why religion should be made an exception to the general laws, whose operation is so apparent in all subordinate affairs. Truth, we know, is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. But the recipients of truth are not always in the same condition. ‘Their understandings may be darkened.’ They may be incapable

of receiving more than the mere rudiments of a doctrine, or a system of faith.

“The remarks which we have made in relation to this portion of our subject will, we think, be found to apply, in all their force, to the promulgation and progress of Universalism in this country, and to the changes which have taken place in the opinions of a large majority of its advocates. There cannot be a reasonable doubt that the doctrine of the ultimate happiness of all intelligent beings was first announced and defended on Calvinistic grounds. It may not be strictly correct to say that Universalism is a *natural* offshoot of Calvinism; it may be more proper to call it a scion that was engrafted upon a Calvinistic stock. And, if the question should be asked, why this basis of doctrine was taken, the answer is obvious: there was no other to take. There may, indeed, have been some few exceptions to this statement. There may have been men, whose theological reading had made them acquainted with other views of the way of salvation than those which emanated from the Genevan school; and of this number Mr. Murray may have been one.

“It may be remarked in this connection that our Calvinistic brethren, and those who first professed a belief in the doctrine of universal salvation, stood on common ground. Both were satisfied with the results of their respective *distinctive* doctrines. The one believed that the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness, secured the salvation of all the elect; and the other, that the same means would prove effectual in the redemption of the whole family of man.

“But this state of things could not always last. The Universalists appear to have taken the lead of other de-

nominations in announcing Unitarian views of the person of Christ, and of the nature of the atonement." (79)

"The place that Rev. H. Ballou, though dead, still occupies among us, will make it grateful to them that go over again with what they already know of him, and will give interest to anything that may be new. He did more than any other man in the work of spreading Universalism in this country; he took the leading part in the transition through which Universalism had passed from its first and very crude state among us, as a separate system; and, though it does not seem to be commonly perceived, he has indirectly contributed much towards the transition through which it is still passing — 1854 — in its further rectification. It is pleasant to consider that the agency which the wise and the good exert does not cease with their death, nor stop even at the limits which they themselves designed. It goes out from their hands, modified indeed, into the hands of their successors, and eventually becomes a part of the impersonal moral force that is diffused through the world. Under the direction of God, it works on to wider results, and gradually throws off even the imperfections with which it is always associated, while it remains a 'treasure in earthen vessels.'

"Our denomination, since its rise in this country, has gone through two noticeable changes of doctrine, and consequently of religious character; for the latter naturally follows the former. There are indications, also, that it has now — in 1848 — entered on the third. Its history, therefore, is naturally distinguished into periods corresponding in time. Neither of these changes can, of course, be assigned to a precise data, as they took place but gradually, like all transitions of this kind, — new influences first

mingled with the old, and, even when these had gained the ascendancy, the elements of the former state of things still reaching forward into the succeeding. The first of them occurred about the commencement of the present century, when the former doctrines of the trinity, of the vicarious or penal character of Christ's death and of Antinomianism, began to give way to Unitarian views on these points. The second took place between the years 1817 and 1824, when the tendency, which had long been increasing, to confine all sin and its consequences to the present life, assumed a more determinate character, and became predominant. The third change, if it prove to be general, may be said to have begun within a few of the last years, when the current of opinion has run more strongly in favor of a moral connection of the present life with the future, and when the sharp outlines of doctrines in general have been softening down, if not sometimes obliterated, to say nothing of certain movements occasioned by rationalistic and transcendental tendencies without." (20)

"Changes are (frequently) spoken of as though they were evidences of unbelief, of dissatisfaction with avowed opinions, of inconsistency; whereas these changes are to our honor; they exhibit activity of thought and a willingness to yield a method of reasoning when that method is no longer approved to the mind; for why should a man incommode himself with a house that dissatisfies him, when he has the means of directly building another?

"One thing is historically plain, and that is, Universalists in all ages, in all periods and conditions of the church, have united in the reception of one great principle, *The final redemption of all souls through the love of God in*

Jesus Christ. This is everywhere apparent. You meet it in the writings of Clement and Origen, etc.

“Universalism has changed, we are told; this is true, or not true, according to the meaning with which the word Universalism is employed. It is *not* true, if the meaning be that *the old foundation* has been abandoned; but it is true if the meaning be, that *the method of argument* in sustaining the great doctrine, or of building on the eternal basis, has changed.

“A word of another transition is attributed to Universalism, — that of changing from belief in no future punishment to belief in a future disciplinary punishment. No such transition has taken place. The same diversity of opinion exists as has always existed, and must necessarily exist among independent minds. The only form of faith ever pronounced to the world by a convention of Universalists, and accepted by the order, was one framed by a committee including believers in no future punishment, and believers in future punishment, as the teaching of the Bible. Our periodicals have been successively edited by representatives of both opinions; and representatives of both views have been elected to the same partnership in churches; and the attempt to make a division of the denomination on this matter most signally and providentially failed. We unite on the certainty of punishment; on the equity of its infliction, on its remedial nature and tendencies, and therefore on its limited extent. If any of us feel certainty concerning punishment existing in eternity, we are also certain that it is there for a good purpose, and will end.”⁽²⁰⁾

“It seems correct to say that the Universalist church in this country has passed through three distinct stages, and is entering on a fourth. During the first, which may be

placed between the beginning of Mr. Murray's preaching and the organization of the General Convention, it was struggling to get rooted. Up to that time (1803), it was a mere possibility. The question of its power to plant itself was a third of a century in reaching a solution. The cause of this apparently long struggle to master the first condition of life it is unnecessary to recite. The 'whole world' was in opposition, and carried its hostility to lengths now incredible. All the churches were a unit against the heresy. Society put it under ban. Its only chance of adoption was with the resolute few, who dared face the public frown, or the unsatisfied, who might have to extract from the new doctrines the consolation they had vainly sought from the old. Besides, it is not to be concealed that the infinite abyss separating the propositions, 'God will have all men saved,' and 'Some men and angels are predestined to eternal death,' is not soon spanned by the 'minds standing on either side. The humble position of the apostles of the new faith might be regarded by some as another obstacle. But since every religion that has taken any permanent hold on the affections of mankind, including Christianity itself, has had this same stamp on its origin, it appears quite as probable that such a circumstance is a help, as that it is a hindrance.

"The next stage was that of development and propagation. Having demonstrated the fact that a Universalist church could live in America, its representatives began, on the one hand, to advance its standard into every field that promised enough followers to support it, and, on the other hand, to develop, elaborate, and shape its doctrines. It was during this period that the great controversy between Universalism and Orthodoxy culminated. It was a season

of 'debates.' The champions of the respective sides were continually brandishing their swords, and the importance of a man was gauged pretty strictly by his prowess in argument. It was an earnest and a warm warfare. Opinions will differ as to which party won the day. But it is certain that, notwithstanding the large amount of worthless luggage it brought from that campaign, and all the disorganizing elements that the conflict ranged on its side, Universalism emerged from that ordeal with a permanent increase in all departments equal to twenty times its force when the combat opened. At the same time, it had exposed its doctrines to such criticism as had compelled them to take the best form calculated to command the assent of reason and resist the assaults of prejudice.

"The third stage was that in which the denomination was gradually aroused to a sense of its educational needs. This period began with the efforts that finally resulted in founding the Clinton Liberal Institute, at Clinton, New York, in 1832. The one school of 1832 has grown into eleven of 1870. The ten thousand dollars, it was so difficult to get to start that, has swelled into nearly two millions, now invested in the educational institutions of the denomination, — an amount that will be largely increased by the contributions of the present year. Three colleges, two theological schools, and eight academies (with others projected) are the present proofs that the awakening on the subject of education in the Universalist church, though prosecuted at first under every disadvantage, has been powerful and complete, as well as gratifying pledges that lack of culture is not likely to be one of its defects in the future.

"It will be thus seen that the history of the Universal-

ist church has conformed to the law of all religious development; and we should naturally expect the next step to be just what we find it, — discipline. The mind of the denomination is steadily taking a stronger and stronger hold of the idea that the greatest power is never gained until all loose elements are classified and compacted into a system. There is a growing disposition to cut away dead branches, abandon crude and cumbersome methods, and adjust all the forces according to the law of organic harmony. As a result, the demonstration is acquiring unity, purpose, and increased facility of action. Many of the experiments in this line recall the first endeavors to develop a right sentiment in regard to education. But there is a visible growth and tendency in the direction of vigorous and definite policies; an accumulating momentum toward something coherent, strong, and certain. In short, what has all along been vaguely described as ‘the denomination’ is becoming a church. The efforts and the contributions of the present year strengthen this tendency. The entire communion will be stirred by a common appeal, fused by a common heat, and united in one thanksgiving.” (119)

UNIVERSALISM AND OTHER FORMS OF CHRISTIANITY.

“‘Wherein Universalism agrees with other forms of Christianity,’ is the proposition before us. The very terms of this proposition, you will say, *assume* that Universalism is to be recognized as a form of Christianity. That is our assumption. We use the reason and understanding common to all men. Our minds are a part of the common heritage of the rational creation. We use those minds in searching into the records of Christ’s life, labors, teachings,

death, resurrection, ascension, and mediatorial reign. The product of our thought demands a place in the Crystal Palace of creeds and systems,—the exhibition of the world's industry in theology and religion. We take that product, and we say, 'Here is our work,—the results of our toil. . . . We do not beg for it a place,—we demand it by the common rights of Christians. Our denomination arose and grew up as others have arisen and grown up,—to give prominence to a neglected truth. We differ no more from other churches than they differ from us, and from each other; and the fact is remarkable that some prominent advocate of other forms of Christianity has interpreted the chief disputed passages in the great controversy as Universalists have interpreted them.

"Here, then, comes the question, In what do all forms of Christianity unite? Or, if it pleases the ear the better, In what do all *evangelical* Christians unite? I will not answer this question by speaking of the common faith in God, in Christ, the Bible, and immortality; but I will take a fresher view of the matter. I will take facts which can be treated without using the language that suggests the technicalities of churches rather than the ideas really meant, and thus give more freshness to the discussion.

"1. All *unite* in recognizing sin, its real existence, and that it is a moral evil, the transgression of the law of God. So does Universalism. Paint Satan as dark as you please, and we own the portrait is not too dark. . . . Sin is a dreadful thing. . . . Sin is disloyalty to God. It perverts our whole nature. It deranges the order of society. . . . We all *know* what sin is. It is the chilling shadow of life, etc. Here, then, in recognizing sin, we are one with all Christians.

"2. All forms of Christian profession unite in *demanding* a remedy for sin. So does Universalism. The antidote goes with all natural evil. Natural theology is the science that searches out this harmony, and seems to prophesy that if the same God rules in the realm of mind as in the realm of matter, there must be a remedy for sin. All ages and peoples have sought for it. Heathen philosophy is sad because it discovered so little the true remedy for sin; and just in proportion as the actual character of sin is seen, the heart of the benevolent must demand a remedy. Herein Universalism *agrees* with all other forms of Christianity.

"3. All Christians unite in admitting that the *remedy* for sin *is not in man*. They repeat in their views the lesson of the beautiful Grecian fable of Psyche, designed to show that only by the *union* of the divine with the human could salvation be secured. From whatever point Christians look at sin, at man's condition, at the necessity for a remedy, they confess the remedy comes not of the diseased one. . . . As the advocates of all forms of astronomy have looked to the same heavens, so Universalists look with all other Christians to the throne of God, to the heaven of heavens, for the help which humanity needs.

"4. All orders of the church unite in recognizing *Christianity* as God's *remedy* for sin. So do Universalists. We bate not one jot of the full claim of the Gospel as *the* remedy for sin. The angel at the birth of Jesus declared, 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people *from* their sins.' John beheld Jesus and said, 'Behold the Lamb of God, that *taketh away* the sin of the world!' And John, the beloved disciple, wrote, 'And ye

know that he was manifested to *take away* our sins ; and in him is no sin.'

"Alike with all other advocates of the mediation of Christ Jesus, Universalists employ this eloquent language, these comforting sentiments. Without the recognition of this relation of Jesus, the reformer is but as Archimedes when he said he could move the world had he a fulcrum for his lever. There was no prop on which he could lay that instrument to lift the world. But in Jesus Christ is given all that the reformer needs. Let him rest his moral lever there, on the rock Christ Jesus, and he will contribute to the force that will move the moral world back into the divine order from which sin has whirled it.

"5. All sects hold up the idea of *faith as the chain of connection* that unites the dying soul with the life-giving vitality of the Saviour. So with the Universalists. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God.'

"6. All orders of the church believe in *good works*, as the *evidence* of the *inworking* of faith, the proof of a vital union with Christ. So do Universalists. . . .

"7. All Christians, therefore, unite in the great sentiment, 'holiness, without which, no man can see the Lord ;' an admonition that was addressed to professed Christians. So do Universalists thus believe and maintain." (20)

IT DIFFERS FROM OTHER FORMS OF CHRISTIANITY.

"Wherein does Universalism differ from other forms of Christianity? I will give my answer under three heads: first, of the *proposition* which Universalism offers for *belief*.

"This proposition is, God has purposed the final salvation of all souls. This is his *absolute* purpose. It over

rules all the possible liabilities of his creatures. This seems to be a proposition easy to be understood. It is a plain proposition, but it is more significant than at first sight it seems to be. It involves thoughts on the soul; the sinfulness of the soul; its need of salvation; what God was, and is, and will be; what it is to be so saved as to be free from all sin; the sin of the past and liability to sin in the future; and then what it is to have *all* souls in this blessed condition, and *God's in the creation fully expressed*; that man should glorify and enjoy him forever.

"The proposition which Universalism offers for belief differs from any proposition offered by any opposite faith, or form of Christianity, in *defining the extent* of saving love. Calvinism states the number of the elect as certain, not to be increased nor diminished, but all is indefinite as to whether that 'certain number' is small or great. It is known only to God, not revealed. So with Arminianism. That leaves the issue just as indefinite; but it is interesting to see how progressive has been the extending of belief as to the greatness of the number of the redeemed.

"It offers the proposition that defines distinctly the extent of the final redemption. It repeats the Scripture, God 'is the Saviour of all men.' He 'will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth.' 'He hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.' 'For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.'

"2. We are to set forth the *principle* of God's moral government, which Universalism offers to *sustain*,—the proposition we have considered. Here comes the why and the wherefore of our difference,—why we stand apart, theologically, from other Christians, planting our own

standard, and ready to do battle for Christ, in the field of duty where our convictions place us.

“ Every proposition in theology, as in science or morals, is supported by a *principle*. Men are frequently driven from the acceptance of a proposition, or to the repudiation of a professed or real belief, *by seeing the principle involved*. When the colonies were taxed, the issue with the mother country was made by the principle that supported that taxation. Behind the act that taxed the tea was the principle that struck at the liberties and rights of the colonists; behind their Declaration of Independence lay the principle that shall yet give freedom to the world. So with the propositions that stand opposed to each other in reference to the destiny of man. We should go beyond words to the idea, and from the idea to the principle it inevitably demands for its support. *If* but a part of our race are to be saved, then the principle of the divine government is *not* that of the good of the *whole*. In the councils of heaven there is no grand aim for a perfected empire in which each and every soul shall have full development. . . . To ‘overcome evil with good,’ is not the principle of the divine government; to do that work — to become victorious over evil — is but a proposed end, here and there, in this soul and that, through a certain round or extent. As to bending it above humanity as the rainbows crown the earth, — that was never thought of. ‘God in Christ’ never proposed to measure himself with gigantic evil. To cut off resources here and there, to subtract some power from Satan’s dominion, is all that Heaven intends. The principle is, the *partial* destruction of *moral* evil. It is not that God may be all in all.

“ The grand principle of the moral government of God

which Universalism offers in support of its distinguishing proposition is, The overcoming of evil with good,—everywhere and always,—in time and in eternity,—to each and to all. ‘He will rest in his love.’ Universalism repudiates the idea that this life is the only probationary state. It is a state of retribution as well as of probation or trial; and, therefore, it is radically opposite to every other form of Christianity in the great plainness of speech with which it asserts that the *law of improvement is eternal for all*. In all realms of life, in all states of being, man shall find encouragements to become holy. Here Universalism differs most tremendously from all other Christian *isms*. . . .

“3. This recalls our last topic, that Universalism *differs* from other forms of Christianity in the hope it inspires and the motive it presents to incite to obedience or loyalty to God from principle. The hope which Universalism gives is an *unconquerable* hope. We set up the motive of Universalism as a matter of *principle*. *Obedience is right*. It ought to be rendered. Nature demands it. Providence requires it. Redemption claims it. It will throw its power into the heart of every faculty, ability, energy, and give the principle of order, beauty, and harmony thereto.

“When will men take up the various *isms* in the Christian church and judge them *by the difference of principle* which is at the root of them,—which really distinguishes them? It will be a happy day for our faith when that is done. Men will see that Universalism differs from other forms of Christianity, because it starts, not with the supposition that man is totally depraved, nor with any other deduction of philosophy, but with the great fact that ‘God is LOVE,’ and interfuses that into everything, as God by his

love upholds, governs, and directs all things, redeeming all the souls he has created.” (20)

UNIVERSALISM THE TRUE FAITH.

“I have no desire to exchange Universalism for any other system of faith. Indeed, I know of no other doctrine that has so much evidence in its favor. There is no other faith which we can pray for,—no other view of man’s ultimate destiny that can satisfy the deep yearnings of the benevolent soul.

“Everything in nature confirms us in the belief that *good* must finally triumph over evil. All God’s works issue in love. If we look abroad upon the fair face of creation we see evidences everywhere of God’s infinite goodness. The sun travelling in the greatness of his strength, dispensing light and heat upon all; the moon, shining in her silver brightness, and the stars which garnish the broad canopy of heaven,—*all* speak to us in language too plain to be misunderstood, that they were made by a God of love.

“And if you will ascend some lofty mountain and cast your eyes over the diversified scenery that presents itself to your view,—the hills that rise in grandeur, the vales that stretch in ‘pensive quietness,’ the ‘venerable woods,’ with their majestic oaks, and even the loneliest flower that blooms by the wayside,—you will see displayed the goodness and wisdom of Him who made them all. And then when you look at *MAN*, the most sublime workmanship of the Deity; when you consider his powers of body and faculties of mind; when you reflect on what he has done and what he is capable of doing; when you take into view his repeated prayers and desires for *ultimate harmony*, his heartfelt

yearnings for the triumph of good, and his Gospel efforts to bring about so desirable a consummation, — you will endorse that isolated truth found in the old creed, that the ‘chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.’

“If there be a hope more grand, beautiful, or sublime than this, it has never been read to me in history, sung to me in poetry, nor whispered by angels in my sweetest dreams! He who sincerely believes this doctrine can die as peacefully, ‘as one who wraps the drapery of his couch around him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.’ ” (184)

PART VI.

UNITARIANISM AND UNIVERSALISM.

THE TWO DOCTRINES.

THE compiler has thought that this work would not be complete unless some part of it was devoted to the subject now before the reader. The selections are made from a large amount of matter on hand, and that only, which, in his judgment, is the best adapted to these pages.

A man may be a Unitarian, and not a Universalist; or, a Universalist, and not a Unitarian. The Universalist denomination, however, is *Unitarian* in its belief of the Divine Unity. It has for more than fifty years taken this position, and maintained it with argument. The Unitarian denomination, however, has not taken the same decided stand in relation to the *distinctive* feature of Universalism. But the signs of the present time are encouraging, that they will be more definite hereafter, and that, keeping the unity of the spirit, they will come into the unity of the faith. (c)

“The difference between Universalists and Unitarians is chiefly one of *taste*; it is not, to any great extent, a difference in the matter of *principles*. We agree so far as we *affirm* principles; we differ *somewhat* in the developing of these principles into dogmatic form; we differ *very much* in taste, — in taste, that is, as regards the way of preaching

these principles. And this matter of taste is a serious one. It cannot be willed out of sight. It will always assert itself, — all the more vehemently, too, if any attempt be made to suppress it. And it is for this reason that Unitarians *as such*, and Universalists *as such*, cannot unite. They may think they can do so, and make the trial; but experience will soon convince them that there is in this matter of taste an irremovable difficulty in the way of ‘fusion.’” (30)

“There is a *difference* between Unitarianism and Universalism; and there is a difference in the mental peculiarities of men which fits them for the reception, some of the one system, some of the other. It may not be easy to define the difference either in doctrines or men; but it is a fact of almost every day’s observation that persons not attracted by the one system, often are by the other, and *vice versa*. These differences, which determine the choice in the first place, are, for the most part, sufficient to perpetuate it, and to prevent any hearty amalgamation, even where mutual interests would seem to dictate it. So, probably, the best that can be done is for each to work in its own way and under its own banners. If Unitarians chose to move in the matter of establishing public worship in a new place, let it be done under their proper denominational name, without concession to, or compromise with, Universalists. If Universalists are disposed to help, as they will in many instances, and as they should, let their help be accorded as to Unitarians and Unitarianism, without expectation of anything in their own behalf, beyond what is common to both.” (31)

UNITARIAN OR UNIVERSALIST.

“Whenever an attempt is made to settle a Unitarian over a Universalist parish, or to get a parish to change its denominational relations, the assertion is made that the Unitarian and Universalist bodies are essentially the same; that they are one in doctrine, one in spirit, and one in purpose. This statement we contend is not true; and our position, we believe, the history and present tendencies of the two denominations will sustain.

“The central idea of Unitarianism refers to the method of God’s existence; that of Universalism, to human destiny. One began its existence as a protest against the received opinions of the church in regard to God and the nature of Christ; the other, as a protest against the terrible doctrines of the church in regard to the penalties of sin, the nature of man, and the final destination of the race.

“In regard to the unity of God, and what logically follows, the Unitarian body has been united; upon all other points of doctrine there has been the greatest diversity of opinions. In regard to theories of human destiny, however, the theological utterances of this body have been marked more by their indefiniteness than their variety. Until within the last twenty-five years the great majority of Unitarian preachers have preached the doctrine of endless suffering, or have been altogether silent upon the subject. The doctrines of annihilation, endless suffering, restoration, and what Unitarians sometimes call ‘the extreme form of Universalism,’ have all found advocates in this body; and to-day, despite the advance to a more positive and better faith which the majority has made, the Unitarian church cannot

be considered, as a whole, as positively committed to the doctrine of the final recovery of all souls. We question whether the writings of members of the Church of England cannot show, to-day, as vigorous attacks upon the dogma of endless suffering, and as strong arguments in favor of the final salvation of the race, as the Unitarian church of America. In this regard there is a marked difference between English and American Unitarianism. The English Unitarians are as decided in their rejection of endless suffering as are the Universalists of America in rejecting the trinity; and were the Unitarians of this country as pronounced upon this subject as their English brethren, the assertion that the two bodies are one in belief would be more plausible. That there are, and long have been, earnest advocates of Universalism among the Unitarians, — men whom we should be glad to welcome as laborers in our order, — we would by no means deny; but the fact remains the same that the Unitarians as a body are not in full sympathy with us.

“If the Unitarians as a body are not committed to our views, then it is folly for a church claiming to be Universalist to change its relations, if it has the least regard for its distinctive faith. The minister sent at first may be everything in doctrine that the most devoted Universalist could desire; but his successor may be a destructive radical; or a ‘philosopher,’ who, from the heights of ‘pure reason,’ dispenses high philosophy to his hungry flock; and when the mourner, thinking of the beatitude, ‘Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted,’ comes to his pastor for consolation, he may be comforted (if there is comfort in the thought), by being told that his wayward boy, for whom he has wept and prayed, may keep on sin-

ning in the spirit world until individuality is extinct, — until he becomes a *monad*, — ‘not a person, but a *thing*.’ Is it for this scheme of possible annihilation that some among us are willing to exchange our faith, — a faith that recognizes no possibility of failure in the divine plan of redemption, but believes in the infinite power as well as the infinite love of God ; a faith that ‘believeth all things and hopeth all things ;’ a faith that has strengthened so many souls to work for man and seek to do God’s will ; a faith that has been so potent in giving consolation to the mourner ; binding up so many broken hearts, known only to God and heaven ? We would by no means assert that a belief in the salvation of the race is alone sufficient ; but we would affirm that our theory of human destiny is the highest possible, and that rightly presented with the doctrines which logically follow, it is the best and truest interpretation of Christianity which we know, and, we believe, the highest that can be conceived. And our distinctive doctrine is too precious, and too powerful as a rallying point for Christian effort, to be lost in any union with those hostile or indifferent to our ideas.

“Let it be understood that we are speaking of union, and not of fellowship. That there might be a broader fellowship between the two denominations ; that mutual criticism might be more lenient, and mutual appreciation more generous ; that we might imitate each other’s excellences as well as avoid each other’s faults, is our most earnest wish. But fellowship is one thing, and union is a far different thing ; and it is a firm conviction with us, which recent thought and observation have only strengthened, that any attempt at union would be suicidal, on our part at least. That the two bodies are not a unit in doctrine must, it

seems to us, be admitted; and it is equally evident to us that the methods and spirit of the two are different." (141)

UNITARIANISM AND UNIVERSALISM.

"Unitarianism and Universalism are both branches on the one tree of liberal Christianity. Unitarianism was more the child of the head, and Universalism more the child of the heart. One sprang up among scholars, learned men, and the aristocratic classes of society. The other was the offspring of the people at large, and was deeply rooted in the democratic elements of the community. When Channing was addressing a few hundreds of the élite of Boston, and other cities, Ballou was making the circuit of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and other States, and preaching far and wide to many thousands of farmers and mechanics the doctrine of universal salvation. Unitarianism was timid, fastidious, cautious, prudent, deprecatory; Universalism was bold, combative, presumptuous, aggressive. One plied reason more; the other stormed the heart. One wielded the logic of learning, criticism, and history; the other laid direct siege to the common moral sentiments of all men. The impulse of their origin is felt to the present day, and the characteristics of forty years ago stand out distinctly now in the respective churches. Both, we believe, have serious defects; but both, we just as firmly believe, are destined to be mighty instruments in the hand of Providence, and the working of the Holy Spirit of God, to upbuild a new and better church, the church of the New World.

"The special stress of Unitarianism was against the trinity, while the special stress of Universalism was

against Calvinism. The former insisted that God was one, — a great truth; the other that God was love, — an even greater truth. The Unitarians cleared up the intellectual conceptions of the divinity, which had been darkened by clouds of Pagan and Platonic philosophy. Universalism substituted a smile for a frown on the face of the Almighty Father. We cannot abide now by all that either party did in its childhood. Biblical researches, the march of science, the culture and philosophy of language, the greater activity of the mind and the developments of the philanthropic age, have broadened and rectified the moral and intellectual lookout and perspective, we humbly trust, of both parties. Unitarians have learned to be more courageous, and have imbibed something of the restoration, from the Universalists; while the Universalists, perhaps, have learned to be more reverent, and have caught something from the great lesson of retribution. And now, to both, the simple word seems to be, Onward, Onward.

“We do not propose amalgamation. They can maintain public worship together, where both are small. They can exchange more freely. We can learn much from the great heart of the Universalist democracy, which beats high and beats warm for such a faith of God, Christ, and the future life as will not outrage and shock the moral sentiments of mankind. And from the careful learning and the earnest humanitarian view of religion taught by the Unitarian divines, our liberal brethren can and have derived much benefit. Head and heart ought to work together, — philosophy and republicanism. One is engaged in building one end, and the other another, of the same great future temple; and if they will both eye closely the divine Master’s plan, and work accordingly, they will find at last that their

several building wonderfully agrees in one glorious church of Jesus Christ." (96)

UNITARIAN TESTIMONY.

"A writer in the 'Christian Register' has a communication under the head of 'Visits among other Churches,' in which the writer gives an account of his visit to a Universalist church; the reason why he went there; the impression he has of Universalists; the particulars wherein he thinks we are ahead of Unitarians, giving evidence of a very liberal spirit, and throwing out most excellent suggestions. We know not what city or Universalist church is referred to; but we know that the communication is worth transferring to the columns of 'The Universalist':—

"MR. EDITOR:—I told you, in my last, that I purposed a series of visits to the other churches of this busy city, Sunday afternoons, when our own is closed.

"My first outside visit was to the Universalist church. The edifice is of a goodly size, with a congregation and parish twice or thrice larger than our own, though the latter has some years the start. The music and singing are not striking. The preacher is a most admirable man, making practical, in life and sermons, the largest social and religious thought of the age. He is a worker in the parish and city, and often is summoned to do denominational work elsewhere. Yet he is not a brilliant preacher. How, then, can the superior growth of this parish be accounted for?

"With doctrines identical with the rising school of Universalism, with better education, and as able men and books and papers, why is Unitarianism behind in the denominational race? Why do Universalists the principal liberal missionary work? So I queried, sitting there, and

listening to a sermon on the "Spirit of the Age" as especially humanitarian.

"1. Universalism is more popular than Unitarianism, because it presents a distinct and welcome idea in its name. When reason picks a long time at the gordian knot, as witness Dr. Hedge's grand chapters on "Immortality" and "Penal Theology" in his new book, the name "Universalist" cuts the knot. Declaring the truth, it leaves its proof in reason and Bible to be developed at leisure. As a church, *we* present no such handle, unless negative disbelief in the trinity be that handle. In the trinity question, head rather than heart is interested; whereas universal salvation, for children and self, appeals to the best human affections and desires. Unitarianism presents no system, but (eclectic) emphasizes the advanced thought of all sects,—the birthright church of the Catholic, the solemn worship of the Ritualistic, the progress of the Liberal, the invisible presence of the Swedenborgian. Few minds are interested in *all* these. Men with one idea flock to their special standard.

"2. Universalism presents the advanced truth in a popular way, seldom shooting *over* the people's heads, sometimes under. Result: more souls are hit. To pry up a rock, you put the lever beneath. It is not easy to prevent eclectic thought thus.

"3. Universalism has the advantage of being *independent*. Our churches are trammelled by being erected on old, Calvinistic foundations. The new wine is flattened by the old bottles. Witness our recent protest against the usurpation of the Congregational name; which, though necessary and right, has the show of trying to take shelter beneath the Calvinistic wing. With rare exceptions, our most pros-

perous churches and live pastors are building on the independent foundations. Universalism contends with no such home lethargy. She was not the boy, pampered with church funds and belongings already provided, but had her way to win. She never supposed the Orthodox churches would, in a little time, drift into her net. She knew she must fish for herself, and she has.

“ ‘4. Universalism (and this is a corollary to the preceding points) hesitates not to use any righteous implement that comes to hand whereby she may attract and broaden the popular thought. That the *method* is *novel or Orthodox* is no objection, so the *thing* is *Christian*.

“ ‘5. Universalism has long been organizing. One symptom: *our* parish takes a solitary “Register” and a *few* other religious papers; a *pile* of “UNIVERSALISTS” are taken into that parish.’ ”

“ Rev. James Freeman Clarke, in a sermon on ‘The Positive Doctrines of Liberal Christianity,’ recently delivered in Hollis Street Church, Boston (formerly Starr King’s), stated, as reported in the ‘Inquirer,’ that the two leading doctrines of liberal Christianity are, *first*, the worth of man, and, *second*, the unchanging love of God for every human soul. The former he represented as distinctly a Unitarian idea as advocated by Channing; and the latter as belonging especially to the Universalist faith, as the following extracts from the report will show:—

“ ‘Of the positive doctrines of liberal Christianity, the first is, The Worth of Man, as a being endowed with the elements of real life and progress, as having evil, to be sure, but good also. This idea was the central one of Dr. Channing, not that he discovered it, but being the most open soul of his generation, and therefore capable of the

fullest inspiration of love and truth, God filled him with the profound conviction of this great truth. As an illustration of the earlier Orthodox estimate of man, the preacher quoted from President Edwards' sermon on eternal damnation, in which the saints in glory are distinctly represented as deriving an enhanced joy and happiness by observing the hopeless condition of torment of the damned in hell; contrasting it with Jesus' story of the rich man, who lifted up his eyes in torment, and desired that Lazarus might be sent to warn his brethren. The impenitent and condemned sinner of Christ is better than the beatified saint of Edwards.

“ ‘The second positive doctrine named is, “The Eternal and Immutable *Love* of God to every Soul.” This truth, as a special article of faith, is to be attributed to the Universalists. Orthodoxy admitted, as the parable of the Prodigal Son illustrated, God's love to men in this world, but restricted it to the threescore and ten years of man's mortal life. Universalism declared that no child of God is ever orphaned, can ever lose his Father. Universalism is the democracy of Christianity.’

“ We are willing that the difference between the Unitarian and Universalist faith should stand and be known as here defined. Both include these two ideas, — the worth of man and the unchanging love and goodness of God. The difference, according to this sermon, is in the order in which they stand. Unitarians put the worth of man as first in the order of their belief, — it was ‘the central idea of Channing;’ while Universalists regard as first, the character of God, as both the source of all that is good in man, and the foundation on which alone they build their theological system. They think the worth of man is but a

legitimate inference from the goodness of God. If God is good, then all his works, including man, must be good; and under his government evil must be overcome with good, and the destiny of man must be a blessed one. But all depends upon, all grows out from, the unchanging wisdom, goodness, and love of God, which are, and alone can be, the foundation of our faith in this glorious consummation."

APPROXIMATION TO UNITARIANISM.

As long ago as 1845, when the "Christian Register" was under the editorial charge of Rev. Mr. Upham, he wrote an article under the above caption, wherein he stated that the Universalists were fast approaching towards Unitarianism, or making *rapid advances* in that direction.

That we may do full justice to this point, we shall give the following from one of our best and strongest writers:—

"Let the following facts be considered, and it will appear in what direction the approximation proceeds.

"1. As far as the doctrine of the *divine unity* is concerned, it was distinctly maintained by Universalists a quarter of a century before New England Unitarianism was known to the American public. It will not, therefore, be pretended that we have made any advances in relation to this particular.

"2. The doctrine of *vicarious atonement*, with all its concomitants, was rejected by Universalists long before the existence of a Unitarian society, as such, on the continent. Here, then, we have made no advances towards Unitarianism.

"3. The doctrine of the *innate and total moral depravity of man* was also rejected by Universalists, many years be-

fore Unitarianism had a name among the sects of our country. We have not, therefore, approached them so far as this item is concerned.

“4. Universalists have steadily maintained and publicly vindicated the proper *paternity of God*, much longer than Unitarianism has had a separate existence among us. Hence, we have certainly learned nothing from them on this subject.

“5. On the score of *vital piety and practical morality*, while neither sect has anything to boast of, it is presumed that Unitarians will not claim that we have acquired anything at their hands. But in personal zeal and manly fidelity to truth under all circumstances of praise or blame, all the world will admit that we are far enough from making any approaches to Unitarians.

“6. In our endeavors to elevate the character of our ministry by a better *theological education*, we are no more approaching the Unitarians, in the essentials of the *doctrine and sentiment*, than we are the Catholics or Presbyterians. And it will not be supposed that we have any special sympathies for either of those denominations. With these facts before us, — and they will apply to every distinguishing doctrine and sentiment of the two parties, — where is the evidence that Universalists are *rapidly* advancing towards Unitarianism? There is no such evidence, and its assertion is alike absurd and ridiculous.” (36)

If the compiler may be allowed to add a word here, he would remark, that there is nothing *peculiar* to the Unitarians, so far as any *positive* sentiment is concerned, that is *not*, that has not been our sentiment, in some form, and at some period of our existence. While the Unitarians derive their name from their views of Christ, and his relation to

God, we derive ours from our belief touching the *final* disposal of the human family. Which of the two is of the greatest importance, as a doctrine or dogmatism, we leave an intelligent public to decide. We only contend for the truth of God; that to which Jesus bore witness, and for which he gave up his life, that he might draw all men to himself, and reconcile them to the Everlasting Father, that God may be ALL in ALL. (C)

THE UNIVERSALIST DENOMINATION.

“We improve this opportunity to say a few words respecting the Universalist body and faith. Universalism commenced as a protest against the unchristian, inhuman dogma of endless torment, about three-fourths of a century ago. It was resisted with an opposition intense, bitter, and in some instances malignant. All that ecclesiastical prestige, prejudice, bigotry, and misrepresentation could do to crush the new infidelity, was done with alacrity and determination. To be an avowed Universalist, in those early days, cost almost as much as life was worth. Still, the new idea found numerous believers and able advocates. It conquered ecclesiastical foothold, then a province, and finally a recognition as one of the ecclesiastical powers of the land. It has formed upwards of a thousand ministers, many of them able, scholarly, devoted men. Two colleges and a theological institute have been established, to furnish a liberal education to young men, and train them for the service of the church. The number of Universalists in America has been variously estimated at from five hundred thousand to two millions. Were all who believe in the final holiness and happiness of every soul, without regard

to the ecclesiastical connections, counted in the list, undoubtedly the larger number would approach nearest to the truth.

“Universalism was more than a negation at the outset. Its emphatic denial of endless torment was the rebound of its positive affirmation of the recovery of all souls. Its first preaching had the ring of a complete, pronounced faith. Still, in the outset, Universalism was a one-ideaism. All successful, social, and moral movements originate in some one idea. One idea gives the needed point to the wedge which is to cleave off errors and abuses. One idea makes a more compact, persistent union than is possible with more. One idea carries a whole system with it by logical necessity. Plant one acorn, and the whole oak comes. The one idea of Universalism was driven home with a mallet of proof-texts, swung by stalwart minds; other ideas followed as it opened the way.

“The first work of Universalists was polemical. They represented the church militant. This stage of Universalism found its ablest embodiment in Rev. Hosea Ballou. John Murray entered the field a short time before his distinguished cotemporary, and was, undoubtedly, superior to him in many respects. But Mr. Ballou possessed that peculiar combination of qualities which fitted him for the pioneer and organizing work he was called to do. A man of strong sense, keen perception, remarkable tact and sagacity, iron energy of will, a faith which approached to vision, and a spirit earnest, dogmatic, and polemical, he incarnated the reaction of the Christian consciousness against the cruelty of the Calvinist creed. He fought a good fight. We know of no man since Luther who has struggled in behalf of a religious faith against such tremen-

dous opposition, so earnestly and devotedly as Mr. Ballou. At the close of a long life, he could look back with grateful satisfaction upon the efforts and results of threescore years of service. He rocked the cradle of Universalism; he beheld its maturity. The Universalist denomination is the child of Hosea Ballou." (95)

"The proceedings of the National Convention of Universalists, for 1869, afford good evidence of the drift of this denomination of liberal Christians. As Universalism has its origin in an intense perception of the love of God, it takes hold of the sentiments, and, therefore, its advocates are fused together by a common fervor. Moreover, the members of this body belong to that class which Mr. Lincoln so happily characterized as plain people; they more readily unite than those of the more cultivated classes. Besides, the early Universalist preachers rested their faith on passages of Scripture. These they used in their controversies with great force and ingenuity. Hence, they have always viewed the Bible with special regard. In all this they are in striking contrast with the Unitarians. The latter, at first, belonged to the cultivated classes, and Unitarianism was pre-eminently an intellectual movement. From the first it has been sharply critical, and has given birth to an intense individualism. It was pre-eminently a movement in favor of free thought. Hence, in several respects, the Unitarian body presents many features entirely different from those which mark the Universalists. The latter can be more readily combined into a sect, and be crystallized into an ecclesiasticism. The proceedings at Buffalo show that the leaders are at work building up a distinct denomination. They impose certain intellectual limits. They will not tolerate a loose adherence to Chris-

· tianity, but insist that both ministers and people shall have a distinctive and authoritative Christian faith. Radicalism and rationalism find little favor for them. There is also an evident yearning among them to be in the common current of Christendom. They have more sympathy with liberal Orthodoxy or Methodism than with extreme liberalism. Drs. Miner and Sawyer fight the battles of the supernaturalists with a fierceness and courage equal to Dr. Gilbert Haven or Dr. Hodge. The chief interest in the recent National Convention centred in efforts for church and denominational organization, and for awakening a deeper personal religion.

“Besides this, as a denomination, the Universalists are giving more attention to the organization of schools and colleges. In this they are wise. Any body of Christians who hope to take a leading position, and make a powerful impression on the age, must have for its prominent guides men of scholarship and thought. To ignore intellectual training is to commit suicide. The Universalists are not going to do so foolish a thing as this. They propose to advance.

“As a whole, our friends have reason to be satisfied with their convention. The spirit which prevailed, judging from the reports, was such as to give them encouragement for the future. They have a large faith and expectation that their ideas will ultimately everywhere prevail, and it is this animating forecast which prompts them to an intenser zeal.” (116)

UNIVERSALISM MORE THAN UNITARIANISM.

“All that Unitarianism has of clear and definite teaching respecting God, Christ, duty, and destiny, is embodied in Universalism. It is continually preached from our pulpits, and it is because of this that Dr. Channing’s works find so ready an entrance to our homes and libraries. *But Universalism is more than Unitarianism.* It is like the Mississippi in contrast with the Missouri, receiving the tribute that is poured in by the richness of Unitarian labors in morals and religion, and flowing on far beyond the end of their grandest reach.

“Speaking more specifically, there are two grand points of distinction and difference between Unitarians and Universalists, so far as *religious opinions* are concerned. These points are,

“First. The Universalist does not believe in a moral agency that can make uncertain the divine purpose, but recognizes all moral freedom in man to be under the control of the sovereignty of God. But the Unitarian says, ‘Our high notions of the liberty of the human will make it almost impossible for us to look forward to a universal restoration to holiness, except as a contingency.’ [‘Christian Examiner,’ vol. viii., p. 261.] This writer adds the just remark: ‘But the doctrine which allows us to hope a universal restoration to holiness as a bare contingency, is not Universalism.’ Here, then, is a striking point of difference. It should be seriously pondered, for here is presented all the difference that lies between what is absolutely certain in the nature and fixed order of things, and that which is entirely a contingent matter, as uncertain as

the fluctuations of the thoughts and feelings of man. Christ was promised, and came to bring a remedy for a universal disease; and all the glory of the prophecies, and his own declarations, and the preaching of his apostles, must be shadowed and darkened, if we do not admit the certainty of, and the final efficacy of, the means and instrumentalities to make man whole, — to redeem the entire race from all sin. To exalt the freedom of the will above the sovereignty of God is to make uncertain every prophecy, and to rob the providence of God of its peculiar glory. It strikes out of view the *overruling* power, wisdom, and goodness of God, and makes all results which are intimated or plainly prophesied in the Scriptures, *uncertain* of fulfilment.

“Universalists believe in moral freedom; but they also believe in its limit by the creating love that gave it, and, therefore, as they behold the moral evils which are in the world, they have no hesitancy in deciding that these evils do not belong to the *permanent* nature of things. The idea that the freedom of the human will is so independent as to make uncertain the purposed final result of the divine government is, to Universalists, absurd. Evil came into the world through the freedom of the will; this freedom of the will was a part of the economy of God; the expulsion of evil from the world is the great theme of revelation, the burden of humanity’s prayer and groan for ages; the Redeemer was promised, and came to ‘take away the sin of the world;’ and the only question is, whether the declarations connected with the efficacy of the Saviour’s work are to be received only as rhetorical flourishes of exaggerated language, or the utterance of the real purpose, the absolute end, which God has designed to accomplish by the mission

of Christ. It was a perfectly voluntary act on the part of the Creator to call man into being ; the gift of moral freedom bestowed on man was given with full knowledge of all the ultimate consequences ; and how can the goodness of the divine government be vindicated on any other hypothesis than the absolutely certain triumph of good over evil, truth over error ? To say that we can anticipate a final restoration 'only as a bare contingency,' because of 'the freedom of the human will,' is to leave the mind in doubt as to the real wisdom and goodness of God in bestowing that freedom, and we are left to cry, 'Who will show us any good ? Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon us !' Let us see, in the ultimate results to which all things tend, the absolute goodness of all thy creating power and wisdom. Universalism presents such results. The glorious truth is, that God hath designed and will secure the ultimate perfection of all mankind ; and the evidence of this design is the same as that by which the attributes of the Deity are ascertained. The perfection of a law is, that it includes all possible contingencies, and ensures the result desired.

"The second point of difference and distinction between Unitarians and Universalists, coming from another class of minds among Unitarians, is, that though a restoration may be anticipated by the teachings of right reason and philosophy, and may be found hinted at in the Scriptures, yet, says the Unitarian, we by no means look upon it as the distinguishing feature of the Gospel, and do not think it should be made prominent in the teachings of the pulpit. This, of course, is not Universalism, because Universalism is the embodiment of a *definite* truth, clearly vindicated by reason, and plainly revealed, not merely hinted at, in the

Scriptures ; and this truth is recognized as the *distinguishing feature* of the Gospel, and should be made prominent in the teachings of the pulpit. Hence the formation of a distinct denomination of Christians, based on the recognition of universal salvation as *the* BIBLE doctrine, and to be kept *distinctly* prominent in the preaching of doctrines and duties, principles and their relations.

“These points are deemed of great importance. We open the Bible, and see that, before sentence on the first sin was pronounced, the promise of a Redeemer was given, that, in the light of the love made manifest in that promise, the punishment might be correctly understood.” (20)

THE THEOLOGY OF UNITARIANISM.

“The success of any system of religious truth, based upon the authority of Scripture, depends greatly on the harmony and just proportions of the facts presented. Nothing is more fatal to the success of Gospel truth than narrow and distorted views of doctrine, each standing towards another in a belligerent attitude. The majesty and greatness of Universalism need no apology for its promulgation. It speaks with an accuracy, fulness, and conviction not found in any other system. A rich, opportune, robust thought, with a dozen abortions clinging to it, is inevitably impeded in its work, and cannot move freely and boldly to the desired result.

“The truths, arguments, appeals, and proofs of Universalism are consistent, attractive, stirring, pungent, vigorous, and fitting ; and full of authority and power. Its principles touch chords, which reach in their vibrations to other worlds and unending ages. Though it speaks

sharply, and comes roughly across men's hearts, and inserts pangs which are keen as the probings of the surgeon's knife, whilst they refuse to walk in the highway of righteousness, which God has opened in the Gospel, it, nevertheless, points to the redemption and ultimate salvation of all men from sin and death, as the inextinguishable purpose of the Infinite Father.

"Universalism has not reached its present and wide-spreading power and influence, by the broad, plain, easy road of man-pleasing popularity, but by the old-fashioned, narrow path, ascending ruggedly, where toil hardens the tendons of the soul, and rocks and roots resist upward progress. In this respect it differs essentially from Unitarianism. Unitarianism has its seats of learning, culture, and wealth, and original and massive thinkers; but it is not outspoken enough for the masses. Sometimes it lifts the soul to the transfiguring mount, where the enlightened vision reaches to the grand interests and the glorified objects of unseen worlds; anon, it tells us that its 'many mansions' are not for all.

"It is a fact that 'The Theology of Unitarianism,' with its cogent and eloquent discourses, and the most polished and elaborate paragraphs that have gone forth from human lips on the subject of sin and holiness, and life and death, refuses to discuss the thrilling and momentous themes of a future life. Here it is at fault, with numerous contradictions and anomalies. The best writers and ablest preachers of Unitarianism are vague and indefinite about the state and condition of souls hereafter, frequently taking ground for the 'endless retribution of the wicked' and the 'eternal salvation of all men' in the same essay and sermon. Some of their writers exhibit strong acumen, joined

to great power of feeling, and would be very strong men if they would vivify their logic by burning appeals to Scripture." (9)

UNITARIANISM IN ENGLAND.

"This doctrine is more like Universalism in America; it is nearly the same, whether viewed as a whole or considered in its parts. As a whole, Unitarians reject the trinity, original sin, total depravity, vicarious atonement, special grace, endless misery, and the correlative doctrines. They teach the unity of God, the divine paternity, individual accountability, the adequate punishment for sin, universal redemption by Jesus Christ, and the final salvation of all men from sin and misery. Considered as individuals, they differ as we do on some points of doctrine, — the inspiration and authority of Scripture, the precise character of Jesus, the time and manner of the ultimate salvation of the race, etc., etc. But these shades of opinion produce no alienation of feeling. They hold to the largest liberty, and reject none from their fellowship so long as faith in Jesus Christ and the authenticity of revelation remains.

"Unlike the generality of American Unitarians, they are frank, bold, and explicit in the avowal of their disbelief in endless misery, and equally open and positive in asserting faith in the salvation of all men. We were able to hear of no exceptions to this remark; and we conversed with many, both of the clergy and the laity. Many of them expressed their surprise that two denominations, so similar as Universalists and Unitarians in this country, should still maintain separate organizations; that no attempts should be made to amalgamate the two into one large and flourishing sect of liberal Christians, whose

united influence would be far more favorable to the extension of knowledge at home and abroad. They professed an equal love for both sects; but some of them were very plain in the expression of their opinion that they thought us more judicious and manly in the utterance of our real opinions than the Unitarians were, who hesitate upon the subject. One of their most distinguished preachers remarked that he was able to draw the most forcible arguments in favor of a pure and perfect moral life, and to present the strongest motives to it from the salvation of all men; for every one, who had the hope in him, would purify himself as he expected to be pure. 'Indeed,' said he, 'I should not know how to preach and enforce morality without it.'

"Hence, to know what the character and condition of Universalism in Great Britain is, we must study the statistics of Unitarianism, adding the different shades of belief, before described, and searching out still another class of minds scattered among the various denominations. . . .

"Unitarians are not very numerous; but they form a denomination respectable for character and numbers, compared with other dissenters." ⁽¹⁸⁾

In an article under the head of "Universalism in England" in the "General Review" of the "Universalist Quarterly" for April, 1868, the editor remarks:—

"In noticing a pamphlet which has had a circulation of twenty thousand copies in England, and which bears this title, 'What is Unitarianism?' an English Unitarian journal has the following remarks, which we commend to the consideration of such of our own communion as think the time for doctrinal preaching has gone by.

"'There are some amongst us who make it their practice

to inveigh continually against what they call "doctrinal preaching," and who tell us the time has come to "let Orthodoxy alone." We are far from being able to agree with them. To us it appears that there is still great necessity for showing how sadly "the glorious Gospel of Christ" is misrepresented in the forms in which it is commonly exhibited, and for exerting ourselves to make it known in something like its original simplicity and victorious reasonableness and beauty. And we are persuaded that if those to whom we have referred were obliged, as we are, to look week by week into the class of religious publications which largely circulate among the people, and see the kind of views which are there set before them, their present feeling would be greatly modified. And still more, we are convinced, would the friends whom we have in mind be led to change their tone, if they mingled more freely with the less educated members of the religious community, and became fully alive to the monstrous perversions of Christianity which they are brought by threats of eternal damnation to receive, and which burden their lives with a constant load of fear. They could then scarcely help acknowledging that a solemn responsibility is upon us to see that the great trust which has been confided to us takes no injury through our lukewarmness and indifference, and feeling that we ought to be ready to "contend earnestly for" what we believe to have been "the faith once delivered to the saints." " (5)

UNITARIANS GROWING MORE LIBERAL.

The compiler was introduced to a popular Unitarian clergyman, in the month of August, 1870, and, after a brief conversation, the subject of Universalism came up, our

are palsied. Many are driven from sympathy and co-operation with the church altogether, because it is not broad enough and generous enough to meet the aspirations of free souls. Read in the dialect of a sect, the New Testament itself becomes the prison of the soul, from which it pants to be set free; but read in its own free and charitable tone, it breaks every chain of the mind, and emancipates the world from all its oppressions and hindrances,—appetite, passion, pride, worldliness,—and makes every man that glorious being, a freeman in the Lord.

“It only remains to speak of the final bar to the ample dominion of the Gospel in the denial of its universal salvation, its universal salvatory, curative, ultimate victory, when all shall be in Christ, and Christ all in God, and God all in all. To propose a great object, and then break it in twain; to put universal grace in motion, and then arrest its march half way; to move heaven and earth, and be defeated at last,—is the dilemma on which the church hangs its creed. It holds that God and Jesus have failed in securing even the moiety of the race, and that the evil spirit runs off with the majority. Hell is more populous than heaven. More men are bad than good. Evil is the rule, and good the exception. Sin is expected, and holiness is unexpected. The whole system, which despairs of God’s mercy in the first place, only to despair of man’s salvation in the next place, is a denial of free and impartial grace; it would forbid the rain to fall on any but the just, or his sun to shine on any but the good.

“Not until the church fills her aged and shrunken veins with the wine of this new and more exhilarating faith of the universal grace of God, can she hope to convert the world. The commission is, “Go ye and preach the Gospel

to every creature." In Christ Jesus there is neither Greek nor Jew, Scythian nor barbarian, bond nor free, male nor female. The ordinary distinctions of human society are obliterated. The grace of God, the love of the Infinite Father of men and angels, is over all, and through all, and in us all.

" 'Welcome to the doctrine that rises above all human enclosures, creeds, or conventions, and embraces the whole race, for time and for eternity, in the arms of divine grace.'

" These are noble words from a noble and manly heart. They have no uncertain or doubtful sound, but the ring of the true and genuine Gospel. And we could wish that all our Unitarian friends were equally as unqualified and explicit in the statement of their belief on the great question of human destiny. We wish they all had the same moral courage and honesty in giving expression to those religious convictions which they feel in their hearts to be rational and true." (106)

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALISM IN EUROPE.

" We give the above title to this article, because it is a well-known fact that the doctrine of the final redemption of all men is almost universally associated with that of the one God and Father, both in this country and in Europe. It would seem to be the logical sequence of the truth respecting the divine character and government, the office of Christ, and the nature of true salvation; though in some cases the greater truth asserts itself independently, and in spite of the errors with which it is fettered by the creed. In England, for example, we have Trinitarianism

and Universalism united ; as in the case of those believers who acknowledge Dr. Thom, of Liverpool, as their leader and expositor, and under whose auspices the London ' Universalist ' was issued a few years ago, which was intensely anti-Unitarian. So in Germany, Universalism prevails largely among those of the evangelical party, so called, while on other points of doctrine they are strictly orthodox. And in England many have asserted their faith in universal reconciliation without having declared themselves in regard to Unitarianism.

"But while the doctrine of universal redemption is held in many cases independent of Unitarianism, and in some cases where the latter is regarded as heresy, Unitarianism is seldom found dissociated from a belief in the ultimate triumph of good and the final return of the last wanderer to the heavenly fold. And this is equally true of American and European Unitarianism. The ' Quarterly ' has contained many notices of works issued in England, Holland, Germany, and France, in which the doctrine of endless punishment has been repudiated, and the Scriptural argument against it presented with great force. Without doubt most of these writers were also Unitarian in their views, and with endless punishment rejected its associate errors, such as original sin, total depravity, vicarious atonement, etc. In England it is well understood that the entire body of Unitarians accept the doctrine of final universal holiness and consequent happiness ; and this is equally true of those in Germany, and probably largely so of those in Holland, Hungary, and elsewhere." ⁽³⁾

“*LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA.*”

The following selection is worthy of a place in these pages. It was written in view of the position taken by the Rev. Dr. Bellows, editor of the “*Christian Examiner*,” the Unitarian bi-monthly of New York. The doctor, in answer to Prof. Brauch, of Strasburg, pretends to delineate “*Liberal Christianity in America*,” to treat of those who are *liberal* in their thought and expression; but, as on other occasions, he does not even recognize the Universalists in any way, sense, or manner.

It was for this fault in Dr. Bellows, and to rebuke the spirit and tenor of the article, that the writer used his pen so faithfully in defence of the truth. It is to the point. (c)

“What are the facts in the case?”

“The first liberal Christian book ever published in America was Ballou’s ‘*Atonement*,’ — a Universalist work. The first liberal Christian ministers and organizations in America were Universalists. When, under the lead of Murray and Ballou, the great liberal agitation was in its earliest stages, the bitterest opponents it met were Unitarians, — men who renounced the trinity, but who still retained other Orthodox errors, — who were in no sense liberal. The pioneers of the liberal movement were so faithful and so successful that Universalist societies have been organized, and Universalist ministers are now actively at work, at least, three to every one Unitarian. In process of time the Unitarian churches accepted the Universalist statements; but the pioneers, the great army of re-

formers, have been among those who, while they are Unitarian, also glory in the name Universalist. The great work of reform has been accomplished by our church.

“Not only was Channing silent on all the chief questions that separate the liberal from the sacrificial churches, except the trinity, while Ballou was thundering against popular errors, but later, when Chapin was uttering his grand words, and Williamson and Whittemore and Thayer were shelling the bastille of Orthodoxy, Dewey was timidly vacillating, and Bellows and Hedge and Greenwood had uttered no word in behalf of the great moral truths of a truly liberal faith. In fine, the Universalist denomination in America was not only the first, and has not only been the most constant and influential, but is to-day every way more generally distributed, and immensely the larger and more powerful body of the two. Outside of Chicago there is scarcely a vigorous or even self-sustaining Unitarian parish in the north-west, while we have a multitude.

“Our friends represented by Dr. Bellows lament over this. As Rev. Mr. Mayo truly observes, Universalism seems natural to the generous people of the great north-west. The truth is, this battle has been fought, this ground has been gained, mainly by Universalists, with only here and there a volunteer, like A. A. Livermore, and we can remember when he was almost the only outspoken preacher among our Unitarian brethren whose words were unmistakable on the great subject that more than any other is the touchstone and test of liberal Christianity, — man’s final destiny. And now for a historian of the reserves, who stayed behind in the intrenchments until the enemy was in full retreat, for him to write a history, not of the reserves

but of the army, and omit all mention of the hazardous reconnoissance, the perilous skirmish, nay, the Waterloo battles that decided the great contest, and only give the story of the sally of the reserves from the rifle-pits, and ascribe the victory to them, omitting all mention of the heroes and veterans who fought three-fourths of a century without them, — this is certainly a strange way of writing history.

“There is in this article absolutely but one line of intimation that there are any but Unitarians composing the liberal Christian army, and that line couples an arrogant assumption with a sneer of contempt. This is the line: ‘Unitarianism (the only scholarly and critical form of liberal Christianity in America!)’ After this not a hint is given that the tremendous reformation of public opinion, that has taken place and is now in progress, is due to any other than the Unitarian body. How any observer can fail to see this, and, seeing, how such a man as Dr. Bellows dares risk his reputation for candor or perception on such a statement as he has made in the ‘Examiner,’ passes comprehension. We are amazed as we read. Had he been writing of the Unitarian body we could understand him, — though even then it would be ungenerous to ignore the aid of such allies as we have been; but to profess to chronicle the liberal Christian movement, and wholly omit all mention of those who began it, who have accomplished three-fourths of the work wrought, and who contribute to-day three-fourths of its strength, if not, as we believe, nine-tenths of it, is a work of which only a blind or bigoted partisan should be guilty.

“We have written these words with pain. We have warm affiliations with our Unitarian brethren. We recognize their claims, and desire to work with them in reform-

ing public opinion and building up the liberal *Christian* church in America. We will join hands with them anywhere in a common cause; but before they can expect thorough co-operation with them on our part, they must get rid of a characteristic tendency to assume the whole of what they have only accomplished a little, and to be the whole of what they are but a small part. Of this tendency Dr. Bellows is a representative man. He illustrates a disposition that is general among those whose opinions are like ours, but who seem to think that the label Unitarian qualifies them to ignore all others, and to claim with intolerable vanity the glory of having wrought all the work, and of contributing all the workmen in this great movement of building up the church of the future. Secondary in point of time, numbers, and influence in the liberal Christian movement, it is either lack of candor or lack of knowledge of the facts that ascribes to one corps of the army, and that corps late on the field and comparatively idle until the tide of victory had turned in our favor, the glory of having wrought all that has been done. The Universalist denomination has a fee-simple title to an undivided portion of all that is denoted by the name liberal *Christians*, and to all that has been wrought by liberal *Christianity*. It does not care to divide the precious heritage, but it will protest that one partner, and that one so long silent, and now owning but the smaller part, should not continually, as Dr. Bellows has done in the '*Christian Examiner*,' arrogate exclusive ownership. Our Unitarian brethren will do honor to themselves and justice to others by discarding this disagreeable disposition." (128)

PART VII.

UNIVERSALISM REASONABLE AND SCRIPTURAL.

PROOFS OF UNIVERSALISM.

It will be evident, from the following sections, that we build our faith upon reason, nature, and the Word of God, — upon scientific truths, and the facts in the case ; and, if there are seeming difficulties in the way, they are less in number than those of any other form of Christianity. This work is not intended to present all the minute evidences of our doctrine, but, rather, to present what has been written upon the various themes herein discussed.

The proofs of our doctrine are many ; they are found on every hand ; for “ we cannot go where universal love smiles not around,” — where the blessings of God have not descended upon his children to make them better and happier. Our likeness to God, the hopes of the soul, and our longing after immortality, — all go to prove that we are not mistaken in our views ; that we have the faith of the Gospel, and that upon this we may rely with implicit confidence, for God cannot deceive us, and the means are in operation whereby he will draw us to himself, and become “ ALL IN ALL ! ” (c)

UNIVERSALISM REASONABLE.

“Come now, and let us reason together,” is the voice of “the only true God,” whose children have been created for a high and noble destiny ; and, since there are unreasonable theories touching the *final* destiny of our race, it is but right that we should bring forward a few selections wherein the subject before us is presented in a reasonable light. We are to judge for ourselves, not only what is right, but what is *the* truth? For it is the truth that sets the mind free from doubt and unbelief. (c)

Rev. Dr. Williamson, in his able work entitled, “The Philosophy of Universalism,” says that the doctrine “has in its favor the clearest decisions of sound reason,” and then adds :—

“Much has been said upon the subject of the office and province of reason in matters of religion, and there are two extremes into which the matter has been pushed. The first is that which calls upon men blindly and passively to submit their reason to authority ; denies the right of private judgment, and claims that men have no business to follow reason in the things of religion, and insists that it is their duty to believe, without doubt, whatever the church, as the oracle of truth, is pleased to teach by authority. The second is that which denounces all authority ; makes scepticism the normal condition of the soul, and faith to be indulged only so far as it is forced upon us by the decisions of our own reason, and culminates in the establishment of an intuitional hierarchy, not less infallible than the Pope, thus proving that two extremes do meet. The truth is probably somewhere between these extremes. There is, in

religion, a sphere and a function for authority ; and there is also a sphere and a work for reason ; and there is not, necessarily, antagonism between the two. Both are legitimate, and both necessary." (14)

There is no system of faith that has called to its aid a greater amount of reason than that of Universalism. Having faith in a divine revelation, we interpret that revelation by the aid of reason, and reason can lead man to adopt no other theory, as to the *final* result, when he has seen the light of the Gospel, and felt the love of God in his own heart. The Gospel is a *higher* light than reason ; but if we give to the Gospel an unreasonable interpretation, it will not become to us the light we need ; and, hence, we shall not discover in it the truth of Universalism. It is when we give an unreasonable construction to the revealed word, regardless of the facts in the case, that our views of the divine government become unreasonable, and, of course, unscriptural. By the light of the Gospel, and philosophy, and reason, we are led to discover the truth of Universalism, even when we have been educated in the popular errors of the church. (c)

"Universalism is based on an interpretation of Scripture, and is, therefore, a Bible doctrine. It accepts the Bible as authoritative in matters of faith and practice, though it makes use of reason as an aid in determining what is truth. One sect makes the church authority ; another, the creed ; but we, the Bible, as explained by the aid of reason and common sense. We think the Bible teaches the fatherhood of God, the lordship of Jesus Christ, the brotherhood of man, and the final holiness and happiness of all. Differences of opinion on minor points, and, indeed, as to the method, means, and time of man's redemp-

differences of opinion, etc.; and in the course of his remarks, he was frank to confess that his denomination was advancing towards Universalism. It is truly so; and we can say there is room for all who will come into our fold.

This conversation led to the following selection, and though written years ago, it speaks the truth to-day. It is taken from an able article on the *signs of the times*. (c)

“ In addition to these evidences of a mighty revolution which is in progress among the more rigid and exclusive religious bodies of the land, we find also cheering indications of progress among the more liberal sects. The Unitarian denomination has, within a few years past, been *growing more liberal* and definite in its belief in regard to the question of human destiny. There was a time when our Unitarian friends were not always clear and decided in the statement of their opinion respecting the final condition of the race. They left this, as we conceive, important matter utterly in obscurity and doubt, and did not hesitate to speak of it as a question of very little consequence. But we are happy to record the fact that of late they have changed their course of action and policy in relation to this question. We are happy to state here to-day that this intelligent and influential body of Christians, one of the main wings in the army of liberal Christianity, do not hesitate to avow their convictions of the truth of the final salvation of the whole human family. And when we say this, we do not mean there are not exceptions to this general statement. There are a few among them who still believe in the doctrine of endless punishment, and others in the idea that the wicked will be annihilated. But the great majority, nineteen twentieths of the clergymen and laity of this body, will acknowledge, either publicly or pri-

vately, their belief in that crowning idea which distinguishes us as a class of Christians, — the universal holiness and happiness of mankind. The current of public opinion has drifted them, as it has others, in this direction. And we welcome them to the joys and the hopes which such a faith imparts. We invite them also to the labors and responsibilities which an open profession of it necessarily imposes. So far as they are faithful and decided in their adherence to this great truth, and unshrinking in their avowal of it before the world, they will find us ready to sympathize and co-operate with them in every Christian work.

“The ‘Christian Inquirer,’ the Unitarian paper of New York, represents that class of Unitarians who are frank and unequivocal in their advocacy of a world’s redemption. And we can ask for no stronger or bolder declarations of belief in this doctrine than have appeared in the columns of this paper during the last two years. We can ask for no clearer or more decided statement of the doctrines and principles of Universalism. Allow me to copy a portion of one article, among the many, which it has lately put forth on this subject. And we ask your careful attention to it, not only for the reason of its noble sentiments, but also as showing the advancement which this denomination has made in the right direction within the last few years: —

“‘Can the church of Christ really become universal, until it believes in universal grace, honors God as a universal Father, and Jesus as a universal Saviour, and man as an heir, sooner or later, of universal salvation? What gives power to Christianity is, in good part, the ideas of Christianity; and when those ideas are shorn and trimmed to the pattern of man’s narrowness and exclusiveness, they

service,—an awakening of the soul, a preparation for the highest use of the worship that answers the social needs of the soul. There is yet another class who are afraid of natural theology, as though it were a rival revelation, rejecting, with something of scorn, Lord Bacon's idea, that 'it opens our understanding to the genuine spirit of the Scriptures, but also unlocks our belief, so that we may enter upon the serious contemplation of the divine power, the characters of which are so deeply graven in the works of creation.'

"No master work has appeared that has pressed nature into the service of the awful dogma that evil is absolute and ultimate, and the conviction has been felt by millions, which was once confessed by a theological opponent to one of our ministry,—'so far as nature is concerned, I allow that Universalism has the argument.'"⁽²⁰⁾

IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCES.

Coleridge has defined art in the following language: "Every human feeling is greater and larger than the exciting cause,—a proof that man is designed for a higher state of existence; and this is deeply implied in music, in which there is always something more and beyond the immediate expression."

Now, as the arts when carried to their perfection, all tend to *elevate* the human race, and draw the soul nearer to God, and to all that is lovely and beautiful in the universe, filling the mind with the liveliest of emotions and the noblest of conceptions, so is it with Universalism, as a sentiment, the perfection of all theology, as to man's *final* destiny, when he shall have completed his earthly course,

and received the divine and the finishing touch in his spiritual regeneration.

As it is the design of the *fine arts* to reveal the hidden beauties in nature, and the skill and industry of mankind, intellectually, so is it with that form of faith we cherish. It draws out and elevates the hidden beauties of the soul, and every nerve of our spiritual nature is calmed, and we can look at things unseen, as though we were in the highest degree of excellence and reconciliation with Him who is above all. And the more we study the arts and sciences, the more confident is our faith in God, and that all things in nature are going on unto perfection, so that man, even, will not prove an exception in his government.

The Christian religion and the fine arts, divested of all error, corruption, and abuse, have the tendency to purify man's nature and to inspire him with a love for all that is elevated in thought and feeling. And the pure in heart shall see God, and enjoy him forever.

It is a fact, in the history of the world, that the best conceptions of God and his moral government exist in the minds of his people where there is a love for and improvement in the *fine arts*. And Universalism, containing the best ideas of God's love for man, and his purpose in bringing all things to perfection, prevails to the largest extent where there is a continual progress in the arts and sciences, and with these in the morals and spiritual culture of the people. Universalism keeps pace with the improvement of society. Could we select a state where the doctrine is generally believed, and where there is a good condition in society, where there is a growth and progress in the arts and sciences, — in everything that tends to make man better and happier; and for some reason, an influence

steps in that is not from Universalism, and how soon there will be a change in *that state*, not only in religious feeling, but in morals,—in the general improvement of society, and in the arts and sciences. This speaks well for our doctrine, and is an argument in its favor. When Universalism becomes the prevailing religion of our country, as we believe it is destined to, we shall behold the highest condition of society, not only in morals, but in spiritual culture, and the highest perfection of the arts and sciences, in civil and social government. (c)

An excellent writer says :—

“Christianity not only presents the absolute view of truth and right, but it involves, also, the absolute view, and indicates the central element of the principle of taste. . . . It reveals the Infinite One, the object of the highest sublimity, as the being in whom centres our deepest interest, and who demands our supreme reverence and service.

“And, lastly, though not yet recognized in the creeds of the Christian world, it represents, as its grand consummation and issue, the universal family of man loosed from the bonds of mortality, corruption, and sin, and rejoicing together in immortal freedom, beatitude, and glory, around the throne of God.

“The art of Christendom is, in its character, emphatically subjective. The outward beauties of form it does by no means overlook, but yet, while giving to these a suitable attention, it directs all its greatest efforts to the expression of the inward and spiritual. External nature and heroic achievements are not its favorite subjects; its themes of mightiest interest are derived from the spiritual relations of man.

“Christianity has given to modern art the grandest conceptions and the loftiest sublimity of spirit; and even modern productions, that are purely models of the beautiful, it has elevated and inspired with a higher expression of a spiritual life. . . . And though the infinite is the grand and central idea of the Christian as well as Oriental art, yet in Christian art it does not predominate to the exclusion of human passions and sentiments.

“The last great element of Christianity, which we have mentioned among those calculated to exert an æsthetical influence, has not hitherto received the faith of the Christian church, and consequently has not as yet produced its legitimate effects in the sphere of art. An idea, of a kindred character indeed, is expressed, as we have already stated, in the fifth symphony of Beethoven, and, we may add, also in the Messiah of Handel. The closing part of this latter composition sets forth, with striking effect, the resurrection of *all* in Christ, the change of all, and their anthems of rejoicings and thanksgiving before God. If the believers in universal salvation wish to have their faith realized to their senses as well as to their hearts and feelings, let them lose no opportunity of listening to this sublime oratorio of Handel's, as well as to the symphonies generally of Beethoven.

“It is in the future, however, that the doctrine of the universal ingathering of mankind is to exercise its destined influence on art. It shall be in coming times the theme of grander music than was ever yet struck. A pencil surpassing Raphael's shall portray on the living canvas that finishing scene of unequalled sublimity; and a verse, loftier than Milton's or Dante's, shall sing to other ages its transcendent and ineffable glories.

“ Let Universalism tolerate and promote everything that is true in science, and beautiful in art, and noble and good in human life. . . . The spirit of Universalism, in its genuine, catholic form, is essentially the spirit of Christianity itself, and architecture, therefore, to accord with the genius of Universalism, must be genuine, Christian architecture, the beautiful and the grand.” ⁽⁸⁸⁾

ST. PAUL'S UNIVERSALISM.

“ 1. St. Paul, in speaking of his commission as an apostle, says, in writing to the Galatian Church: ‘ But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.’ Here he distinctly declares that the Gospel he preached was not human, but divine, received by express revelation from Christ. Paul, therefore, preached the Gospel of Christ.

“ 2. Paul preached the *whole* Gospel. Hence he says, in his address to the elders of the Ephesian Church: ‘ I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you;’ and again: ‘ Wherefore, I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.’ Note these words, that he ‘ kept back *nothing* that was profitable unto them,’ but ‘ declared unto them the *whole counsel* of God.’ Paul, then, preached the whole Gospel of Christ.

“ 3. We now observe that the epistles of Paul, fourteen in number; make up two-thirds of the New Testament writings, — two-thirds in bulk, and in the number of documents; and yet *in not one instance in all these epistles can*

the word HELL be found, in our English version of the Bible! This is a significant fact. Paul, who took the Ephesians to record that he had 'kept back nothing that was profitable unto them,' and 'had not shunned to declare unto them the *whole* counsel of God,' never once alluded to hell, or used the word in one of his epistles.

"4. We ought, however, to observe, in this connection, that one of the Greek words rendered hell, namely, *hades*, was used once by Paul, in 1 Cor. xv. 55; but how is it rendered there? This shows what Paul thought of *hades*; — what it was to him. He says: 'O death, where is thy sting? O *grave* (*hades*), where is thy victory?' With Paul, then, *hades* was simply the *grave*. Paul never preached *hell*, as preached at the present day, in one of his sermons, or introduced it into one of his epistles.

"5. But still another fact. Paul did not preach what is called *aionion*, or *everlasting punishment*, in any of his discourses. We assert this fearlessly. The word *everlasting* is used but once in connection with punishment in any of Paul's writings; and if it refers in that case to the final doom of the persons referred to, it teaches not their endless misery, but their *annihilation*. The passage reads thus: 'Who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction* from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.' Now, we could easily show that this passage refers to, and was fulfilled in, the overthrow and destruction of the Jewish polity, and the dispersion of the Jews throughout the earth. This, we say, we could easily prove. But it suffices for our present purpose to call attention to the fact, that in the only instance in all Paul's writings in which the word *aionion* is used in connection with punishment, if it refers at all to the *final* doom of the parties threatened, it teaches

annihilation, and not *endless misery*. This is a significant fact.

“6. But lastly, we say, that no one of the New Testament writers has taught more fully or declared more pointedly the glorious doctrine of the salvation of all than Paul. His language is clear and unambiguous. He says expressly, ‘God is the Saviour of *all men*, especially of those that believe.’ — And again, ‘God will have *all men* to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’ He says also of Christ, that he ‘gave himself a ransom for *all*, to be testified in due time.’ And again, ‘Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’ These are but a few of the passages in which the doctrine of the salvation of all is taught. Such can be found in every epistle, with the single exception of the Epistle to Philemon, which was written for a special purpose, and contains, therefore, nothing of a doctrinal nature.

“Here, then, are facts to be remembered: — that Paul received the gospel by *revelation from Christ*; that he declared, in his preaching, the *whole* counsel of God; that he never alluded to *hell* in his writings; never threatened men with *endless misery*; but taught distinctly that ‘God will have *all men* to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’ When our Orthodox friends will bring as strong argument to show that Paul believed and taught the doctrine of endless misery, we will give them a hearing.

Till then, we ask our readers to remember that *Paul was a Universalist*, and that *Universalism is the Gospel of Christ.*"^(a)

TESTIMONIES FOR UNIVERSALISM.

The following are a *few* of the *many* selections that might be presented, if there was room for them in these pages.

"We suppose that the goodness of God, through Christ, will certainly restore all creatures into one final state, his very enemies being overcome and subdued. What, then, is that subjection with which all things must be subdued to Christ? I think it to be that with which we ourselves desire to be subdued to him, and with which, also, the apostles and all saints who have followed Christ have been subdued to him. For the very expression, *subjected to Christ*, denotes the salvation of those who are subjected."

— *Origen*.

"God can never punish any man more than is necessary for his reformation. He cannot mistake in the choice of his means, and must always reach his end. He would appear less lovely, if one creature should be forever miserable." — *Steibart*.

"God punishes, not for the common good only, but also for the reformation of the sufferer, which being accomplished, punishment has no further use. It was designed to influence the love and practice of virtue; and when these are produced, it must give place to the happy consequences of amendment." — *Eberhard*.

"God's design in creating finite intelligences could only be to make them eternally happy, in the knowledge and love of his boundless perfections. Almighty power, wis-

dom, and love cannot be eternally frustrated in his absolute and ultimate designs ; therefore, God will at last pardon and re-establish in happiness all lapsed beings." — *A. M. Ramsay.*

"Vindictive justice in the Deity is, I own, no article in my creed. All punishment, in the hands of an infinitely wise and good Being, I think, must be medicinal." — *William Duncombe.*

"Human nature abhors the very name of eternal punishment, which sets before our eyes a spectacle of insatiable, implacable revenge, and this for no manner of profit or hope of amendment." — *Dr. Burnet.*

"God would act unjustly in inflicting eternal misery for temporary crimes ; the suffering of the wicked can be but remedial, and will terminate in complete justification." — *Thomas Moore.*

"There will be a period, somewhere in the endless futurity, when all God's sinning creatures will be restored by him to rectitude and happiness." — *Dr. John Foster.*

"The nature of evil shall, at length, be wholly exterminated, and divine, immortal goodness embrace within itself every rational creature ; so that, of all who are made by God, not one shall be excluded from his kingdom." — *Gregory Nyssen.*

"God is love. He will, therefore, never cease to desire the delivery of every man ; here, there, in eternity, he will labor for it. God is the only principle ever the same, ever active. Oh, certainly, the time will come when the Son shall have subdued all to the Father !" — *Fredrika Bremer.*

"At the grand and final consummation, when every will shall be subdued to the will of good to all, our Jesus shall

take in hand the resigned chorllage of our hearts ; he will tune them as so many instruments, and will touch them with the finger of his own divine feelings. Then shall the wisdom, the might, and the goodness of our God become the wisdom, might, and goodness of his intelligent creatures ; the happiness of each shall multiply and overflow in the happiness of all ; the universe shall begin to sound with the song of congratulation ; and all voices shall break forth in an eternal hallelujah of praise." — *Henry Brooke*.

UNIVERSALISM SCRIPTURAL.

Notwithstanding we believe that Universalism is the doctrine of reason and nature, and that it is in the arts and sciences, yet we base our only hope of a full and complete redemption of all souls from all sin and misery, upon the revelations of God in his word. We do not underrate the Scriptures, nor look upon them as indefinite, or as wanting in proof of our glorious sentiments. There is no other *theory* that can be made to harmonize with reason, nature, and the progress of society in an enlightened age, like the present.

We quote the following from an able, careful writer. (c)

" We shall not attempt, in this discussion, to name every passage in Holy Writ that teaches the doctrine of Universalism. If we err at all, we prefer to err on the side of brevity, rather than on that of redundancy. It seems to us a sound maxim of interpretation, that a single, clear passage on any subject is decisive. Unless some equally plain passage points in an opposite direction, one passage settles the matter, and almost forecloses further argument. Still, as it may be thought that a matter of so grave im-

portance as that of the salvation of our entire race, would be stated more than once in revelation, we shall consider the import of several texts.

"There are numerous texts, which, in their broadest signification, can only be made to harmonize with Universalism. Some of them, however, might be uttered in a rhetorical sense, even were the harsher creeds of the day true. Such passages are these: 'The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.' 'The mercy of Jehovah endureth forever.' . . . If any one feels that we have overlooked some of what he deems the most convincing proof-texts of Universalism, let him remember that we merely propose to state a part of what seem to us the clearest declarations of the word of God, on the destiny of man. We do not undertake to exhaust the subject. Enough that we present proofs from the divine word of the truth of Universalism, which cannot be answered or gainsaid." (38)

"Universalists found their belief on the teachings of Christ. They believe that Christ taught Universalism unequivocally and distinctly. When, therefore, they announce the celebration of their centenary year, they do not mean the centenary year of Universalism as a doctrine, but the centenary of Universalism as being the distinctive tenet of an organized denomination in this country. As to the truth of their distinguishing idea, — the final holiness and happiness of all the human family, — they believe it, of course, to be as old as the creation; they believe it to have existed, in the mind of God, as a divine idea, from all eternity, and to have begun to be a practical reality when the first man was born; they believe it to have been revealed obscurely to the early members of our race, and

to have been taught implicitly, if not explicitly, by Moses and the prophets ; and, finally, to have been fully declared by Christ himself, and by those disciples whom he commissioned to preach the truth which he had received from the Father. They believe a true interpretation of the New Testament to support the truth of their idea invincibly, and they know from history that their interpretation of that book is not a new interpretation, but is as old as the book itself. They trace their fundamental doctrine through the writings of the early bishops of the church, and they find it plainly emphasized by such distinguished men and recognized interpreters of holy writ as Clement of Alexandria, president of the great Catechetical School, at that place ; Origen, who succeeded him in that position, and who, from the prominence he gave to the doctrine of universal salvation, has sometimes been called the father of Universalism ; Eusebius, the renowned father of church history ; the two Gregories ; Didymus, the blind ; and Jerome, who, from his secluded cell at Bethlehem, sent forth an influence which reaches even to the present time.

“ Universalists, therefore, claim for their doctrine, even when viewed simply as a human theory, or as an interpretation of the Bible, as great a prestige in point of age as can belong to any other Christian sect.” ⁽⁵⁶⁾

TAUGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

“ The present section is devoted to a consideration of the Universalism of the ancient Scriptures. Let it be understood, in the outset, that we have but little confidence in the prevailing method of proving doctrines by mere textual expositions of certain passages. The doctrines of the

Bible are taught rather in great principles than in the formality of words, and we are always suspicious of any doctrine that can only be made out by a mere construction of terms and phrases. On that basis the controversy can never be ended. Only when we fall back on first or general principles can we find a solid landmark by which we can stand. Take, for example, the doctrine of endless punishment. There is no principle upon which that doctrine can be justified, except it be the principle of retaliation, or evil for evil. That principle does not belong to the divine government, and therefore, the doctrine cannot be justified on that basis. What, then, is the resort of its advocates? Simply to a few, a very few words and phrases. 'These shall go away into everlasting punishment.' Those that blaspheme against the Holy Ghost 'shall be in danger of eternal damnation.' [The Bible must be interpreted by the known, or revealed character of God, and the nature and object of Christ's mission. And hence the paternity of God is the prominent feature of revelation.]

"In the Old Testament, Universalism is taught rather in the recognition of the great principles of which it is the legitimate result, than in dogmatic forms and phrases. The New Testament builds upon the foundation of Moses and the prophets, amplifies these principles, and more definitely announces the conclusions to which they lead." (14)

Whatever of doctrine there is in the Old Testament, touching the character of God, and what he intends to do with his own offspring in their *final* destiny, is Universalism; and the New Testament is but a continuation of God's intention, — a more complete revelation of his will and design. And as an able writer has said, "What difference does it make whether Christ taught Universalism in

plain words, or whether he laid down those principles from which the great and glorious doctrine must flow, and from which nothing else can flow?" (c)

THE VITALITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

"It may be said, Christ is the vitality of the New Testament. He stands the light of all that reveals God, that makes the New Testament the sufficient and efficient revelation. 'Without me,' he said, 'ye can do nothing;' 'In him,' the Apostle Paul declares, 'we are complete;' and he also says, 'Your life is hid with Christ in God,' and that he is in the soul 'the hope of glory.' Moreover, it may be added, Christ declared that he came that life might be given, and that it might be increased in those who already possessed it; and he asserted, 'I am the resurrection and the life;' 'I am the way, the truth, and the life;' 'The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.' And all through the New Testament we find this short, but infinite word, *life*, employed to denote the grand influence of the Redeemer. And the raising from the dead of Jairus' daughter, the widow of Nain's son, and the brother of Martha and Mary of Bethany, did but symbolize the imparting of spiritual life, which is the crowning act of Christ's mediatorial power. Now, with all this before us, how can we say that *Universalism* is the *vitality* of the New Testament? Is not this putting upon an *idea* what belongs to a *person*? Is it not taking Christ away from 'the words' which *he* alone can make 'spirit and life'?

"To all this we answer, No! because we get at Universalism in and through Christ. Universalism, we maintain, is the vitality of Christ; the life he possessed could have

subsisted with no idea less than that. Any other conception of the great end to which God is and was pointing the forces of his sovereign grace could not have filled the mighty heart of the first philanthropist. We look into that heart, and we see that every throb is the pulsation of the life which Universalism gives, — the love of God for our undivided race.

“The vitality of any system for the moral benefit of mankind lies in the idea of the leader; and an intimation of Universalism, as the vitality of the Gospel, is given in all those instances of benevolence, enlarging as the work of reform is carried on, which makes the histories of philanthropic enterprises so interesting.

“‘I never doubted the doctrine of endless punishment,’ said a good man, with a powerful intellect, ‘till I became interested in the temperance reform. *Then* I saw men, by the power of kindness, brought up from the depths of moral degradation; and I felt that if the resources of human love could do so much, the Almighty must have greater resources than we dream of for the recovery of the impenitent. My labors increased with my faith in God’s benevolence.’ So John Newton, when told that there was no encouragement in his day for missionary effort, replied, ‘I never doubted God’s power and grace to convert any one since he converted me.’ Here the vitality of the man’s work was in the idea of grace which he cherished. The greater the idea, the more breadth it received, the more extensive became the field of practical operation, and the more determined the spirit of effort. We find an illustration of our proposition in the fact that many hearts have confessed that they felt for years a strange spirit of love breathing upon them from the New Testament, inclining them to

Universalism, but against which they struggled as a suggestion of Satan; and when they at last yielded to the faith of universal salvation, it was because they could not resist the overwhelming spirit of love. A life came to them that made them alive unto God as the universal Redeemer; and that life so entered into every dead affection and torpid sympathy, that they could not but own, 'This, *this* is the glory of the Gospel!' Hence, many have confessed to us that for years they were like the disciples of Emmaus, with hearts burning with strange fire, — a greatness of warmth was there which they did not understand, and its source and tendency were known only when Jesus made himself known to them as the risen Redeemer of the world. So, also, a patriarch in our Israel was wont to tell all who conversed with him about his faith, 'I was *always* a Universalist; but *I never found it out till I was sixty years old!*' O God! how different would those sixty years have been, in the spiritual experience of that man, had he known in childhood what was the real meaning of that life which was in him! How earnestly should such teach their children to pray, 'Satisfy us *early* with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days'!

"Here, then, is the great need, — to see clearly that Universalism is the vitality of the New Testament, that we may receive the true life. How, then, shall we proceed? The way is plain. We have only to ask, '*What is the essential principle of the Gospel?*' This, whatever it is, must be the interpreter of all 'texts' and 'passages,' and must be to us the grand guide in all our explorations into the kingdom of truth. What is the essential principle of the Gospel? What is absolutely necessary to fill out the language of the inspired writers when they speak of 'the fulness of the

blessing of the Gospel of Christ'? A grand expression, deprived of the idea essential to fill it out and justify its language, is like a full, round face reduced by fever, so that we see a haggard countenance with lingering suggestions of how beautiful it once appeared. Let the vitality that once gave that face its beautiful richness operate again, and you will see an image of what the sublime language of the New Testament, touching the extent of the redemption in Christ, is, when, after it has been narrowed and thinned by partialism, it is filled up by the glorious idea of unlimited salvation! . . . Hence the grand definition of the ministry of reconciliation is, 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.' If this be so, what can be the vitality of the New Testament but that great purpose which ordained the coming of Christ, and instituted all the offices of his church and the truth? Everything in the development of the Gospel is but the manifestation of God's love to the world,—universal love. That love animated Christ; it was his life; it is the life of his religion; and just in proportion as we receive it, do we receive of the vitality of the New Testament, and enter into the experience of Universalism. The full development of this principle can issue only in universal salvation. Its operation was declared by the Redeemer in explicit terms: 'And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.' The magnet ceases not to throw out its mysterious power to draw from the atmosphere of the needle manufactory every particle of steel dust to its point; and the glittering cloud there gathered is not more demonstrative of the invisible and wonderful power of the magnet, than the work of the Redeemer shall find the demonstration of its perfection in a redeemed world." (20)

IN HARMONY WITH GOD'S WORD.

“Should we examine this all-embracing call of God on the principles of Universalism, his word and works would harmonize, his means and ends meet, his unerring wisdom be luminously displayed, and his all-encircling love fix the confidence and warm the affections of a rebel world.

“For this system contends, in the language of inspiration, that all things, consequently all men, are created for God's pleasure; that his pleasure is, that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved, and that, therefore, it is consistent with his original purpose to call, ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.’

“Were part of the human family created for God's displeasure, and were that displeasure that they should never come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved, there could be no propriety in commanding all to repent and live; for, should they comply, the intention of God would be defeated. For as he is in one mind, and none can turn him; as he is not man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent: having spoken, he will not go back, — having purposed, he will accomplish. Hence his *primal* must be his everlasting design. The Scripture asserts that it is impossible for God to lie; but should he call all the ends of the earth to salvation, without intending to bestow it on all those whom he calls, he cannot be free from duplicity. And should he design to confer it on all whom he invites, his pleasure can never be accomplished till they are all happy. We hence infer that God's character suffers when this call is explained on Calvinistic or Arminian principles; and that, unless we adopt the

exegesis of Universalism, we make him either *weak* or *cruel*, and therefore undeserving of trust, or unworthy of imitation." (38)

"Universalism occupies the only ground in relation to the existence, object, and end of evil, on which it is possible to establish a philosophy of creation consistent with the perfection of God; the only ground that makes faith in God a freedom and a joy.

"That God was not compelled to create this earth and its inhabitants; that he was not forced into the act by any influence or power outside of himself, is certain. That he clearly foresaw the sin of man, and all the evil and suffering that would follow the act of creation, is also certain. This being the case, it is certain that he voluntarily determined out of himself, from his own will and pleasure, to create just such a world as we have here, and just such beings as men, physically and morally." (39)

"Universalism is based on the will of God. That doctrine is true, because God wills that all men shall be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth. If God willed the contrary, all men could not be saved. God's will is absolute. Who will deny this fact? Who will say the will of God can be thwarted, or set aside, or successfully resisted? Will any man take that ground? It would seem that no man could do so. Does the Bible say, in any part of it, that the will of God can be successfully resisted? Does not the whole tenor of the Scripture show that God's will is the mainspring of the universe? 'Of old time the nations knew that God spake and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast.' God never intended that anything should actually be done, at any time, that was not done at that time.

“ ‘ If this fail, the pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble.’ ” (3)

“ Universalism alone is compatible with the spirit of the Gospel. For it must appear by this time, as remarked in the beginning, that the doctrine of God's universal love, securing the universal redemption of our fallen race, is the only system that is compatible with the full cultivation of the feelings of kindness, tender-heartedness, and forgiveness. Here the work may be carried on to perfection, without our becoming too sensitive to the sufferings of the world. There is a mighty power in this sentiment to subtract the bitterness of grief, which would pierce the feeling and tender soul in view of the miseries and misfortunes of life. That power lies in the great truth which it teaches, that all evil and suffering shall result in good ; that God, under the wise administration of his government, will make the whole mysterious scenes of discord and suffering terminate in harmony and joy.

“ Here, then, is the great field for the cultivation of the noblest feelings which can be made to stir in human souls. Here they can be cultivated without any fear that they will be blighted or frozen with mildew and frosts of a *false* theology.” (37)

IN HARMONY WITH HUMAN FREEDOM.

“ Those who deny the great result which Universalism affirms, and hold to the opposite doctrine of endless misery, have come, for the most part, to do so on the ground that men have been vested with a moral agency, or freedom, in the exercise of which the lost so choose, and continue to choose, perversely, as to render their perdition inevitable.

. . . The centre of the difficulty, it is alleged, is in man's perverted will. God has made him free; and while he desires that all should be saved, and has done all he can to have them saved; while his Son has made an atonement sufficient for all; while his Holy Spirit is ever striving with all to induce them to accept the terms of salvation, — he will not violate man's freedom even to save him. This is the popular, *taking* argument usually urged as a last resort against Universalism, and the covert behind which shelter is sought from its conclusions. When we have reasoned from the elements of the divine character, and the principles of the divine government, irresistibly to the final reconciliation; when we have appealed to the Scriptures and to their exposition of the divine purpose in Christ; when we have shown in words that cannot be gainsaid that God 'will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,' and that he 'worketh all things after the counsel of his own will,' and 'doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth;' when, finally, we have shown from the express testimony of Christ and his apostles, that he 'will draw all men unto him;' that it 'hath pleased the Father by him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven,' and that 'when all things shall be subdued unto him . . . God shall be all in all;' the reply almost invariably is: Yes, we know all this, but men will not be saved; as Christ said to the Jews, 'Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.' (47)

"The opposition to Universalism exerted by this supposed free agency is very easily overcome, by showing the entire fallacy of contending that the all-wise Creator has

been the author of something which may and does frustrate his own purpose. Whatever agency or capability man possesses, God, who created him, must have been its author. Whatever God creates, he must design for a definite purpose, which purpose is certainly as infallible as his wisdom. This short and simple argument, corroborated by the divine declaration that God 'works all things after the counsel of his own will,' is as effectual in refuting the existence of the agency contended for, as a treatise could possibly be." (2)

"When we speak of the law of the evolution and progress of Universalism, we mean that steady development which it observes according to a fixed and uniform order.

"Now the first postulate of Universalism is, that God is a being of universal and eternal love. This is the only logical and sufficient base of the doctrine. To be sure, there sometimes seem to be other roads to the conclusion of universal salvation. But the antagonist soon dislodges you from every other position, and drives you to this impregnable fortress. Here is where Universalism started; here it has remained. But how do we know anything of that universal and eternal love? We get it only in its fulness and satisfaction from the revelation made through Jesus Christ. Make as many trials as you will to find the infinite, satisfying love of God, you will be forced continually to recur to, and finally to rest in, the revelation of Jesus Christ. And what do we know of Christ? Just what the Scriptures tell us. Criticism and scepticism have assailed them; but there they stand, the essentially unimpeached witness of the life and history of Jesus.

"Hence the Universalist, starting with the thought of God's universal and eternal love, finds himself logically

driven to this resting place — the Holy Scriptures, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Here, then, we find not only liberty, but a *law* of liberty. The plant grows by a liberty it derives from the *law* of its growth. And so Universalism has grown by the ‘law of liberty,’ and has never become and never will become ‘Christless.’

“James calls the Gospel the ‘*perfect law of liberty.*’ If we examine our theories with reference to the solution of practical problems, we shall find there are many things they do not explain. On the other hand, we do not, certainly, fully round out and realize our faith in our lives. In other words, Universalism, as we know it, is not, either in theory or practice, complete. It is yet imperfect. But the Gospel is the *perfect law of liberty.* We must, therefore, hold, with John Robinson, that there is yet much truth to ‘break forth out of God’s word.’ While Universalism is to us the completest expression of the Gospel yet put into definite form, we look to the future for its perfect development. The full apprehension of the Gospel must be reserved to the eternal ages. In the mean time the kingdom of Christ advances. His words and life are observed to draw all the sects of Christendom more nearly into one. What we see accomplished and accomplishing, prophesies the perfection for which we yearn. The time shall come when all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest.” ⁽³⁰⁾

UNIVERSALISM NOT A FAILURE.

“We have shown that Universalism is *not a failure*, as a moral influence for good; and we wish to show now, that it is not a failure as a moral restraint against evil. We are

well aware that the assertion is made that Universalism has no restraint that the different forms of partialism have not. But in this, too, is a sad mistake; because all the partialist churches unite in saying that this world is a state of *probation*, and not a state of *punishment*; that the question whether a person will be punished at all or not for his sins, depends entirely upon whether he repents or not before he dies.

“They do not anticipate that the good man will be punished for his bad deeds, nor the bad man rewarded for his good deeds. And instances are on record where crimes have been committed, with deliberate design to escape the penalty by timely repentance. Now we teach a very different doctrine. We say that punishment is absolutely certain; that God will by no means clear the guilty; that he will certainly render to every man according to his work, whether it be good or bad.

“We say that punishment is a remedy *provided* and *prescribed* by the great Physician of souls, and that it must be taken until the malady of sin is removed. And no system of partialism has ever exercised the restoring influence of this doctrine. But the wisest legislators, judges, and jurors acknowledge its salutary influence upon character and life. The grand jury for the city and county of New York said, in their presentment for January, 1840, “It is the hope of escape that gives encouragement to the criminals. The certainty of punishment is of infinitely more consequence than its severity in preventing crime.”

“The learned Dumont said, in his report to the council of Geneva, that ‘it may be laid down as an incontestable principle that, in matters of penal justice, everything which diminishes the *certainty of punishment is an evil*, — every

punishment which is not fixed, which floats between fear and hope, is a punishment badly contrived.'

"The celebrated Beccaria says, 'that crimes are more effectually prevented by the certainty than the severity of the punishment. That the certainty of a small punishment will have a stronger impression than the fear of one more severe, if attended with the hope of escape.' Now all these authorities testify to the salutary influence of a certain punishment; and that is exactly our view of the government of God over the world.

"And, what is more, the prophet Isaiah gives a similar testimony. He says, 'When God's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness; but let favor be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness.' And the prison statistics, which we have already quoted, give the best of evidence to the salutary influence of our faith, even with our imperfect system of church organization. They show that our faith has a powerful restraint upon vice and sin, and that those who assert that it is a failure, as a penal system, are really false-witnesses." (M)

PART VIII.

THE PROGRESS AND POSITION OF UNIVERSALISM.

THE PROGRESS OF UNIVERSALISM.

“PERHAPS, in a denominational sense, we do not discover the progress of Universalism to move on so rapidly as we should desire it; still, it is losing no ground. If it appears to be resting at any time, it is but to gain strength, and start again with renewed zeal and energy. We must not anticipate too much in its spread, but look more to its growth in strength and permanency. Looking at it in this light, it is certainly girding itself like a strong man to run a race. The desperate struggle of its warfare is over; it has gained a place among the denominations of the Christian world, and surely it is not esteemed as the least of her principalities; it has gained an influence among them all; and, indeed, that influence is more or less everywhere felt, in every church and in every Christian heart; so that while we may not, in a denominational sense, see its progress so rapid, yet, when we cast our eyes around us, comparing the past with the present, we behold its progress like the sweeping of a mighty torrent.

“Universalism is gaining strength and improvement among its advocates, and its aspect is becoming more and more agreeable to its opposers, so when it shall become as

unobjectional as agreeable, it will be readily received in preference to their own faith. Its truth is the secret hope of all Christians and of all people; but that fear, that 'it is too good to be true,' keeps thousands plodding their cheerless way on what they consider the *safe side*. But when they look upon their natural weakness and their shortcomings, or whenever they attempt to seek acceptance with their God, they find then that the only safe side is in the fulness of his mercies; and declare that, if they are ever saved, it must be through his infinite goodness and free grace. Their safe side avails them nothing in times of affliction and sorrow, and when their own heart condemns them. It is then they feel to abandon their *safe side*, and place their entire confidence upon God's unbounded love and mercy. Thus it is the secret hope and confidence that the doctrine of Universalism is true, in spite of all their prejudices against it, as of a denomination, and in no other light do they feel to oppose it. If the ministers of other sects would preach it, the majority of them would receive it with gladness. Hence the spirit of Universalism is adapted to all the better feelings of man's nature, and is rapidly finding its way into the human heart; it will soon break the narrow ground of partialism, and bring the scattered folds into the glorious liberty of truth." (20)

"The progress of Universalism since the era of the Reformation, and its present condition and prospects, fill our hearts with joy that cannot be expressed, while we are led involuntarily to exclaim, with the highest feelings of gratitude, 'It is the Lord's doings, and it is marvellous in our eyes.' When we look back a century, we see a single individual, — a stranger in a strange land, — lifting his

lone voice upon the wild shores of America, to repeat the good tidings of great joy to all people, which were once heard upon the plains of Judea, when an angel from heaven announced the advent of the Saviour of the world! We see that meek and self-sacrificing servant of the Highest peaceably pursuing his way through evil report and through good, and counting the most fierce and malignant persecutions as nothing, so that he might honorably fulfil the high purposes of his mission. We see him, not only in the midst of bitter reproaches, but exposed to severe personal injuries from the violence of bigotry and the rage of maddened zealots, still casting the good seeds of the kingdom of God, and proclaiming 'the unsearchable riches of Christ' to sinful and suffering humanity.

"We should greatly err, however, if we were to estimate the present condition and actual prosperity of our cause merely by the number of churches, ministers, and members embraced in the statistics of the Universalist denomination. The broad principles of Christian truth and universal benevolence, which we delight to cherish and labor to propagate, have extended their redeeming and salutary influence far beyond the limits of our own churches. Their power has been felt, and the good fruits of their operations are made manifest, in every Christian sect around us. Doctrines that were proclaimed in tones of terror, and submissively received into fearful and trembling hearts but a few years ago, find neither advocates nor believers in these days of better light and increasing knowledge. The character of preaching in general has become essentially changed. And almost every successive change is but an abandonment of some false tradition of men, and a certain,

though, perhaps, an imperceptible, approach toward the doctrine of *Universalism*.”⁽⁴⁶⁾

BALLOU AND UNIVERSALISM.

“In 1791 there appeared a preacher of Universalism, who was destined to fill a far larger place than Mr. Murray filled, and do a work he could not do. This preacher was a young man, born, reared, and educated among the granite hills of New Hampshire. His father was a Baptist minister, and the son had been a member of the Baptist church, and only just expelled,—not because his Christian character was impure, but because he believed that God is the Saviour of all men, specially of them that believe. At this time he had never heard a Universalist sermon preached, and had never read but one Universalist book, and that was the Bible. He had listened only to Baptist sermons,—and undoubtedly they were good ones,—but the Book was too much for the sermons. It converted him to the faith that God will save all men; that he will, through him whom he has appointed to be the Saviour of the world, make all men finally holy and happy in heaven. The young man, unlike many in that day, and a great many in this, could not keep his conversion to himself. He must be honest. His honesty of course was rewarded by excommunication from the church to which he belonged. But it by no means turned him out of the great, broad church of Christ. It is not asked there what a man’s creed is, only whether he loves God and his fellow-men. He may be a Universalist, or Methodist, or Baptist, and still have no place there; and he may be any one of these, or neither of them, and have his name written in the Lamb’s book of life.

"With this new truth burning upon his soul, the young man felt an unconquerable desire to impart a knowledge of it to others. So, with only the preparation which a life among the rocks and hills, and an academical education, and the devout study of the Bible, and a heart graciously affected and influenced, could furnish a man, he went out to preach, as empty-handed as Christ and his poor fishermen preachers were. And somehow he had a rare knack at preaching, as though he had been born full of sermons, and had but to open his mouth and out they came. Real, living sermons they were, too, and went straight to their mark. They took fast hold of men, and could not be shaken off. They were what Henry Ward Beecher calls *meaty* sermons, — there was substantial, life-giving bread in them, without a bit of fog or moonshine.

"Well, this young man went out to preach, and he itinerated up and down in the land. He preached in barns and groves and private houses and by the wayside. The churches opposed him, and called him bad names. Bigotry smote and buffeted him in all possible ways, and the little dogs of sectarian spite and malice barked and snapped at his heels. But his word grew and flourished. Societies were planted and churches builded. Other laborers came into the field to take part in bearing the heat and burden of the day. And so the work went forward, and, ere many years had gone by, a large and flourishing denomination had an existence, its boundaries those of the United States and territories." (144)

"Throughout his ministry, Rev. Hosea Ballou gave great prominence to the doctrine of the divine paternity. He believed that Universalism, and Universalism alone, could impart to that doctrine any fitting significance; that

it is in vain for the various Christian sects to call God our Father, and still interpret the final issues of his government as utterly merciless. Things, not names — deeds, not words — determine moral principles. To vindicate the pater- nity of God, his government must be paternal; not in one of its stages merely, but in all stages, — in its incep- tion, in its instrumentalities and its results. In short, a father bears a peculiar and an abiding relation to his chil- dren; and a good father never finally forsakes his children. This truth held a central relation to all his teachings, and furnished the inner life of many of his happiest illustra- tions.

“Mr. Ballou thus became Unitarian in 1795, when there had never been a Unitarian publication issued from the press in this country, and when there was no preacher of the doctrine; although a few clergymen, perhaps, privately believed it. This was twenty years prior to the breaking out of the great “Unitarian controversy,” and the recogni- tion of the sect now known under that name.

“Nine years later, in 1804, he published his ‘Notes on the Parables of the New Testament,’ and in the year fol- lowing his remarkable work on the Atonement, in which the doctrines of the trinity, vicarious suffering, and endless punishment are assailed with a clearness of reasoning and a force of argument rarely met with.

“By this time, 1805, Mr. Ballou had won over to his views all his brethren in the ministry, except Mr. Murray of Boston, and Mr. Mitchell, of New York. From that day to the present, both he and the entire body of the Uni- versalist ministry, with perhaps three or four exceptions, have steadfastly believed and openly defended Unitarian sentiments.” (108)

THE POSITION OF UNIVERSALISM.

“ Universalists, though perpetually assailed as a graceless and faithless people, have many of the noblest qualities that ever adorned and dignified a Christian sect. They are the best fitted, for the mighty work which the Father has committed to their hands, of any class with which I am acquainted. They are not of the white-gloved class, who are afraid of work. They are not of the purse-proud class, who think labor a disgrace, and who are spoiled by their immense possessions. Neither are they of that poor class who have been so crushed by poverty, so discouraged by adverse circumstances, that they have no heart to engage in a great enterprise, no courage to battle with mammoth evils, and no confidence in a regenerating power which can rectify all disorders and make all things new. They are the very people fitted, by their natural endowments, by their position, by their earnest zeal and manly firmness, for the work of evangelizing the world. I use the phrase evangelizing the world, in its true import, and not in its common one; for I am far from thinking those evangelized whose religion consists in believing a human creed; in being governed by a proselyting zeal; in cherishing sectarian hatred and bitterness, and in opposing every great movement in behalf of freedom, love, and humanity. I shall call the world evangelized, when the Gospel takes the place of human creeds, freedom of bondage, peace of war, justice of injustice, plenty of want, equality of inequality, love of hatred. I look for this chiefly through the instrumentality of our people. I do not expect that they are to do it all, but they have the doctrines

by which it is to be done; and they are imparting the light which shall ultimately warm, enliven, and guide all hearts.

“The position, therefore, which is occupied by us is one of the most important of any ever occupied by a Christian sect. And this is, of course, the position of Universalism in the great work to be accomplished. It is this doctrine that is to do the work, for it is the moral power of God.

“Out of our position grow great and important duties. It is our duty to keep our radical views always prominent in our preaching, our writings, and our measures. There is a growing neglect of this duty among some of our clergy. You may hear them preach for months, without listening to a clear and full defence of one of those great truths on which hangs the fate of civil and religious freedom, and which are never enforced without weakening some oppressive chain. . . . They are called practical preachers; but you might hear them till time ends, without having one clear idea of what it is to be like God, like Christ, or how to build up a government like God’s government. Much of what is called practical preaching is the flattest and most insipid and impractical of all the poor preaching with which the church is afflicted. There is but one way to preach practical sermons; and that is to apply the doctrine of Christianity to the hearts and lives of the people.” ⁽⁴⁰⁾

“In regard to our position we make the primary claim that we are Christians. We resent the papal insolence which leads men who claim the right to think for themselves, to unchristianize us because our thinking does not see the same things in Christianity that they see. And how inconsistent in men who would thus destroy our liberty, to welcome Hyacinthe in the name of liberty!

“Of our position, more especially, we claim to be loyal to *truth itself*. We know nothing about ‘dangerous’ truths. We do not admit the possibility that any truth can be a dangerous one. We welcome any discovery in science, in astronomy, or in geology, and have no fears as to its effect on faith or piety. All truths, no matter in what realm we find them, are God’s truths.

“Again, our position is, not simply loyalty to truth, but also to *Christian* truth. We accept whatever nature discloses; but we accept more. We supplement natural with Christian revelation. Behind the laws, forces, and evolutions of the universe, we see, guiding all, the Infinite Father. And Christianity gives us this. What would this universe be with no God behind it, ruling in love? We think the earth solid. Warehouses and banks and fields, — we think that they are real. Suppose that should happen which astronomy shows to be possible, — what it shows has really happened in one of the stars of the sixth magnitude, — that the oxygen of the sun should ignite! In an instant the solid earth, and all material things on it, would disappear as mist. In fact, nothing is solid but spirit, the wealth of souls, which fire cannot burn, nor waters drown.

“Once more; believing in truth, in Christian truth, we take another step, and hold that *Universalism is the only consistent interpretation of Christianity*. We take this ground in entire charity. We do not claim that other sects have no Christianity. We do not claim to monopolize all. We all interpret; we hold that our interpretation is nearest the Christianity of the New Testament. Why, everything that really draws near to God partakes of his love. Christ lifted up draws all men to himself.

“Lastly, under this head, we discover, and we rejoice to

discover, the spirit, and often the substance, of our truth in other sects. We do ourselves great injustice if we measure our strength by statistics. No cause progresses by *abruptly* conquering other sects. There is seldom a *numerical* surrender of one party to any other. In formal controversy both sides profess to gain the victory. We conquer not always by compelling those of other sects to take our name and avow our principles, but by influencing them to modify their creeds and accept the spirit of our own. And in this day how great has been the progress of Universalism the past forty years! There is no such preaching of hell as was formerly the staple of the pulpit. Universalism, it is often said, is 'running down;' — so it is, into men's hearts; into Orthodox creeds and churches; into literature and life. To-day every great heart welcomes it.

"Such, then, is our position." ⁽²⁴⁾

UNIVERSALISM A POWER.

"We have no need to seek the applause or the popularity of the world, to enable us to carry forward our cause to a glorious triumph. If the 'battle is of the Lord' (and who doubts it?) all the powers of darkness and hell combined cannot prevail against it. Universalism is of heaven; it is eternal truth, and it cannot be overthrown. He would be wise who should lay hold of the foundations of the mountains with his weak hands to remove them, compared with him who should attempt to overthrow the foundation of our religion. The various obstacles raised to impede its progress by human skill and ingenuity are less than the reeds and rushes against the mighty, rushing

torrent. It has no need to seek the aid of error, for it contains *within itself* the elements of its own eternal existence. It is a rock against which the waves of popular fury will beat in vain, — a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, and which shall finally fill the whole earth. To suppose that it will sooner enlighten the world by being connected with what might be called harmless error, is to call in question the wisdom and goodness of God. And he who preaches in such a way as to purposely conceal its leading characteristics, and thus escape odium, is ‘*unworthy of the kingdom.*’ He brings upon it an injury that its enemies can never inflict. He opens a way for a return to that mental and spiritual bondage which we are required to guard against with all our energies.

“Thus far our denomination has succeeded to an extent that astonishes its most sanguine friends. By what means has it been made thus to prosper? A worldly policy? a trimming to the popular breeze? a sycophantic conformity to the prejudices of the age? a tame style of writing and sermonizing, without any strong attempt to enlighten the mind, through fear of offending? No! the very opposite of this is true; and, although we have sometimes been guilty of unnecessary severity, as a whole, who can doubt that our course has been approved by the Master? Let us not despise, then, the means that have given us the place we now occupy, nor disregard the danger connected with a departure therefrom. Our fathers in the ministry planted themselves upon the strong tower of truth, unfurled their colors, and nailed them to the standard of Christ; and they have fought the battles of the Lord with a success that has carried dismay and confusion into the enemy’s camp. They have proved noble instru-

ments, in the hands of God, of giving us the liberty of Christ. His truth, preached by them, has set us free indeed. And now, it is for us to stand fast in the liberty, and guard well the yoke of bondage." (70)

"When we set forth the superior excellences of Universalism as a 'practical power,' we do not say that there are no excellences in any other system of doctrine. Presbyterianism is a good system of its kind, — elaborate, compact, and thoroughly in harmony with its principles. Professedly, it is no longer 'a house divided against itself,' however it may be with the process of 'healing the old sores.' With that we have nothing to do. It has its genius, and knows that no system can work well except as it is worked according to its own genius. The late union evinces that that church is to be hereafter hostile to all mongrels and mixtures with other and incongruous politics. So Methodism has its genius, and has been an overmatch for its kindred evangelism, standing at the head of all Protestant sects, though scarce one hundred years old. Episcopacy is not deficient in the matter of idiosyncrasies, and mother and daughter are each adapted to produce its own peculiar results; the one the home of the masses, the other a parlor arrangement. In one sense, they are all of God, and called of God each to its peculiar mission. True, we can find neither of them in the New Testament. Our Puritan fathers left no gleanings behind them for others to appropriate when they searched the Scriptures for a church polity. The idea of Congregationalism embraced every feature for which they could find the slightest authority in the word of God. What is true of the individual is true all through. 'To his own master every one standeth or falleth.'

“But still we say, Universalism, ‘as a practical power,’ bears in its bosom blessings for man such as no other system of church doctrine is capable of bestowing, and the solemn duty is placed upon Universalists, by the great Head of the church, to see to it that men receive these blessings abundantly, generously, up to the full measure of our capacity to extend them. In the foreground, then, we place the fact which, as Universalists, we fully believe that our doctrine is that which had the preference of, and was taught by, the divine Master and his immediate followers.” (128)

UNIVERSALISM AND WOMAN.

“I am delighted with the work that woman has found it her privilege, and within the scope of her ability, to do during this jubilee year of our great church. It is peculiarly fitting that women should work with enthusiasm and with zeal, that we may bless the church with our abundant offerings upon the altar of truth. Universalism, the great principles of truth that we received with the doctrine of the great redemption, has made woman what she is; has done for woman all that has brought her up from the realms of barbarism, I might say, to the proud position that she occupies to-day. The great principle of the Gospel, ‘There is neither male nor female, bond nor free, Jew nor Gentile, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus,’ is the uplifting principle that has blessed the world and brought woman up from the condition of slavery and ignorance to her present position; when multitudes of our best schools open wide their doors to her, and when she no longer ignorantly looks on that which is happening under the sun, but looks over the world with comprehensive views, and sees with clear

vision all that is done. She sees what the errors of the past have been; she sees what the needs of the future are, and she sees that one of the great needs of the time is, that she shall come up to a perfect comprehension of her own influence in the world.

“We have been told what that influence is. Let us, sisters, use our influence in its widest power. To this Gospel of the great salvation, which has done so much for us, which comforts every mother’s heart in the hour of bereavement, which blesses the world, and comes to every needy heart with a benediction, which to the poor, the suffering, and the tempted, is just what they need, and which glorifies all the blessings of our prosperous hours,—to this faith it is peculiarly proper that woman should consecrate herself.

“When, after long struggles, through ways of darkness, with no one to counsel, a child in a school of an opposite faith, I came to a knowledge of this great truth, it seemed to me a foregone conclusion, that there could be nothing in this world for me to do but to give my powers and my life to the promulgation of the great, the glorious truth, which is the one thing which this world needs to bring to us the dawn of the millennium morning, when, upon every tented field that can be found upon the face of this whole earth there shall come forth, not conquering hosts, sweeping over the earth, and bringing bloodshed, suffering, and ruin in their train, but the armies of the Prince of Peace, as they come from this tented field. And I look to the influence of woman in the future, added to the influence of our brother man, who has so long and so grandly worked,—I look to her influence and to her work, as she shall wisely use the abilities which God has given her, to hasten on the

time when on every tented field we shall hear the triumphal notes of the Gospel, and the hosts of Zion shall go forth to victory ; when the kingdoms of this world shall be subdued and become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ ; when there shall be ' one Lord, one faith, one baptism,' and ' we all shall be one in Christ Jesus.' " ⁽¹²¹⁾

" If we women of the Universalist church were all consecrated, were all of one mind, and had the same zeal, and the same enthusiasm that we have sometimes as individuals, we should be able to lift this church up into the very first Christian power. It is because we lack faith in ourselves, it is because we do not fully take in all that our faith is, that we are weak. My friends, I do not know but I have said this to you before ; but I must continue to say it. This faith of Universalism, during the twenty-five years that I have believed it, has grown upon me, until to-day it is the one central thing with me. I do not now, and I cannot hereafter, engage in anything that is not, as I see it, the outcome of this faith. Universalism is to me synonymous with Christianity. I do not mean that we have the whole, complete, but I think that we are the nearest in our faith, theoretically, to the doctrine that Jesus Christ taught, of any church on earth. If this be boasting, then I boast, and I am glad to do so. Through the doctrines of Universalism, through its simple faith, I expect the world to be conquered. Through the doctrines of Universalism, I expect sin to be overcome. Through the doctrines of Universalism, I expect this nation to become what God intended it to be, — the beacon light of the world ; upheld, moving forward, exalted, with the grandest government, with the noblest people, so that all nations may not only flock unto it, but pattern after it. I have no hope for the

race only as it is the outcome of my faith. Wellington is said to have rested on a certain hollow square, by which he won the great battle of Waterloo, after defeat was imminent; and so I rest myself upon the doctrine of Universalism, which with me is synonymous with Christianity; and through it I expect the world to be conquered. Do you say that I am using small weapons for great purposes; that these doctrines are but the pebbles of the brook, which David will take to kill the Goliath of wickedness and sin? Look at them! See what they are! Look at the doctrine of God's fatherhood! All denominations believe it, I am told, constantly. Yes; but, nevertheless, they do not believe it as we do; for the doctrine of God's fatherhood means what Christ taught us in that beautiful parable in the fifteenth of Luke: 'What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?' Mark the words, '*until he find it.*' Not search until he concludes it is hopelessly lost, or until he is wearied and abandons the search. He said no such thing as that; but search '*until he find it.*' Up amid craggy mountains; down into deep, dark ravines; in the teeth of the tornado, — search '*until he find it,*' sometime, somewhere. Then what? 'And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.' Mark the language again, — it is not mine, but Christ's, — 'rejoicing more over it than over the ninety and nine that went not astray.' And so, friends, if we hug ourselves in pharisaical self-complacency, and imagine ourselves higher in the regard of God than the poor, drunken brother in the gutter, than the poor, fallen sister, from whom we gather our skirts as we pass, lest contact be pollution, Christ has taught us differently, for he has taught

us that God, who has all there is of love in his nature, — the love of father, mother, brother, sister, — a love that is infinite, eternal, overwhelming, and omnipotent, — Christ has taught us that God our Father will pass us by, who need no salvation, and hunt for the poor brother, or the lost sister, *until he find them*, and then rejoice more over them than over us, who need no salvation.

“My friends, we can help make Universalism more of a power than the world dreams of. Do you tell me that it is unpopular, — that the world pours shame upon it? What if it does? Does that signify anything? So much the more let us cling to our faith, bind it upon our brows, carry it in our souls, and let the whole world see we are not ashamed of this blessed gospel of Jesus Christ.” ⁽³³⁾

MEANS FOR ADVANCING UNIVERSALISM.

Our means for the advancement of the cause in which we are engaged have greatly increased during the last twenty-five years, and these can be made tenfold more powerful for good, to the upbuilding of our spiritual Zion, if we do our whole duty. It is not so much the increase of *new* means as the application of *old* ones that is needed at the present time.

If some *new* method could be adopted, whereby to greatly increase the circulation of our periodicals, and the sale of our books, it would add to our strength and numbers. And there are far too many of our families, who are abundantly able to subscribe for a religious paper, that live without this means of grace.

The compiler is also well aware that there are many families who have but a few of our books in their homes,

that are well calculated to increase their joys ; and it is hoped that these pages may lead the reader to see that every family is well provided with the right kind of religious literature. (*c*)

“The missionary work is an important branch of Christian service, and if faithfully and wisely attended to, will do much to spread a knowledge of the truth, and lead the people to walk in its light and practise its teachings. Nearly all denominations have, to a greater or less degree, made use of these means to advance their interest, and our own has not been entirely indifferent to this branch of labor. But the Universalists, as a denomination, have done but little missionary work in the popular sense of that word, and yet but few have exerted a greater practical missionary influence than our own people. We have had but few societies for raising funds to be expended for the employment of agents or to distribute tracts ; and yet the denomination has grown in numbers and influence, so as to be feared by its opposers and approved and honored by the liberal community everywhere. This is an evidence of the truth of our system of religion, and should be the means of inciting our friends all over the land to renewed exertions.

“If we look the case over ; if we examine the history of the growth of our cause from the time Murray began to proclaim the glorious truths of a world’s redemption, to the present time ; we shall discover the light of the living fact, that the ministers have been self-constituted missionaries, travelling from place to place, instant in season and out of season, preaching Christ and him crucified, — Jesus and the resurrection, — in every place where a door could be opened to them, and to all who would lend a listening ear.

“Read of Murray, Winchester, the elder Streeters, Bal-

lou, Whittemore, and a host of others, — not necessary to name here, — and behold the mighty work which they, by the grace of God, were permitted to do in behalf of the great doctrines of divine love. They were missionaries in the best sense of the word, going forth unsupported by human aid, but relying upon the great arm of Jehovah, and by that they were always sustained.

“And why were they so successful in their labors? It was because they proclaimed the plain truths of the Scriptures; because they declared the doctrines of the Bible so that all could understand them; they gave utterance to living truths, and the common people heard them gladly, and they would go away from their meetings, feeling that none could so preach except God was with them.

“There is nothing that comes right home to the human heart with such power as God’s truth. We are now a large people, denominationally speaking; we have grown to our present position, to a great extent, by the influence of individual ministerial missionary work. It is true the people have aided cheerfully these heralds of the cross. But we may now work more energetically and successfully by associated action, if such action is rightly directed. But if we would be successful, we must do as did the fathers, — speak plainly, distinctly. Ours is a positive system of religious truth; every Universalist is a positive man; if he were not, he would not be a Universalist. It is that element or trait of character that enables him to assert his faith before an opposing people. To have become a Universalist in days that are past, a man was obliged to face the storm and sail against the current of worldly systems of faith. It requires something of that bold spirit in many sections of our land to-day. Universalism cannot

flourish without God's truths are plainly declared, any more than a plant will grow healthy without the warmth of the sun." (142)

THE SOURCE OF ITS STRENGTH.

“In the first place, a source of our strength is in the sects. We grow from without, from them. There is, indeed, a strength independent of others. But a denomination can only verify its title to the freshest, largest, and best Christian thought by extension. And this extension is into the sects. These are the source of our sect. It was the culmination of a religious need. It was wrested from other communions by earnest prayers and tears; and ever since the fathers we have drawn largely from them. We sent up our protests against the current notions; and, besides answering us with numbers, they gave us more rational statements of faith. And with the modifications came new adjustments and improved relations. It is a great thing to take advantage of the phase of thought that appears in the onward march of truth. It is a grand nature that is sensitive and flexible to the conditions that need a master mind to mould and control them. Adaptation secures denominational strength. We may augment our forces by fighting and taking prisoners, or by the more civilized process of peace. When the challenge was made to test dogmas, there was no appeal but to the sword of controversy. But when the victory is pronounced for us, and confirmed by improved interpretation, our labor changes. We are not now so justly in the attitude of antagonists. We cannot afford to dwell upon past issues at the expense of more needful work. It is no sensible thing to whet the sword when the enemy lies vanquished before

us. It is better to adjust ourselves to the fallen. It is better to use the 'oil and wine' with the ambulance. Nursing is needed when dogmas lie dead in the texture of faith, or men will die to religion and think little of the victors. Much feeling is engendered by heated conflicts of opinion, which requires many long years, with kindly assurances, before it subsides. We indulge in wonder over the prejudice against Universalism from the older sects; but it is perfectly explicable when we consider the telling blows it dealt, even to the destruction of their pet dogma. The ill-will toward the Universalist sect is not unlike that which existed between America and England on account of the Revolution; not unlike that which existed between the Papists and Protestants on account of the Reformation. Sects do not think it a privilege to be vanquished out of their notions. Nor does it very much improve the temper of those who are under the necessity of being the vanquishers." ⁽⁸¹⁾

"Our specific need is the use of the materials that are properly ours, the appropriation of our strength, the consolidation of our power, the bringing of our people, everywhere, to realize that it is one thing intellectually to apprehend, and another thing personally to apply. There are any number of men all over the country who believe theoretically in Universalism; and I am thankful for that. But that does not build up the Christian church very much, and it builds up our denomination but very little. I want the theory of salvation that we believe preached in every pulpit, taught in every Sunday school, and lived in every home. I want the doctrine that universal salvation implies universal obedience preached; that every man is born into the kingdom of our Lord through faith in Jesus

Christ, and becomes a consistent Universalist only when he consecrates his life to the good of his church and to the welfare of the world. I believe in universal salvation; but I believe in it on the basis of universal obedience, and I do not know any other. So, therefore, if we believe that every man, in order to be saved, is to be born into the kingdom of God, and become a consecrated Christian in his life, let us preach it in our pulpits, and let the word of our secretary, everywhere he goes, and of all our representative men everywhere, be, 'God is our Father and loves us; but we are spiritually his children only as we enter into spiritual communion with him.' I believe in the publication of our denominational ideas, and I want all men, everywhere, converted to a knowledge of our faith; but a perception of the truth is not the application of it; and the need of the denomination to-day is the application of the theory,—the personal appropriation of what we profess to believe." ⁽¹⁰⁾

UNIVERSALISM THE RELIGION OF LIFE.

"It is one of the characteristics of the present time, to judge every phase and form of religion by its practical worth, and its influence upon the life of man. And in marked distinction from the older and more popular forms of faith, we claim for Universalism the merit of its peculiar adaptation to the wants of the present life. It recognizes the mission of Christ to this world, and the importance of building up here on earth a kingdom of righteousness and love, presenting religion as the comfort and discipline of the soul, and the chief means of elevating human life to that noble destiny intended by the Creator. It does not

ignore or lose sight of the future, but gives more prominence than other systems to the practical teachings of Christianity in their relation to worldly happiness and success. It regards human life as a unit, embracing both its present and future existence, treating both the soul and the body as one gift, alike in character, and earth and heaven as equally necessary to the growth and development of man. It has not one set of duties for the body, and another set for the soul, nor does it condemn, as carnal and devilish, the material enterprises, aspirations, and desires of man, and pronounce, as holy and divine, all his spiritual and devout manifestations. It reconciles the material and spiritual with each other, claiming for all honest labor and lawful enjoyment the service of God, and proper relationship to the welfare of the soul. It does not separate religion and spirituality from daily life and duty, serving God at times and seasons, and himself all the other while, pronouncing the outward forms of worship divine service, and the ordinary duties of life secular service; but so impresses religion upon the thought, spirit, and character, as to render all right action, all thought and devotion, a divine service.

“This life, although short when compared with that which is to come, is of great importance in the economy of God. It is not merely a probation, a place of trial, nor a mere penal colony, the home of spiritual outcasts till disposed of by their final doom; but was designed as a place of happiness and improvement, the scene of positive blessing, a benevolent gift to be followed by still richer unfoldings of divine mercy. God has a future in store for us; but he has not fixed its conditions here, nor brought its glories nor its terrors so near as to disturb the equanimity

of the present order. One life and world at a time are sufficient for our care. We have the present as a fact, and the future as a faith,—the one to be *lived*, and the other to be *believed*; and we are commanded to be faithful over the things we have, with the promise of greater things hereafter. Man requires the Christian religion to solve present difficulties, and to inspire to duty, to interpret God in his providence, to sanctify home, bless the marriage altar, and assist him in subduing his passions and chastening his loves. And we claim that that view of religion which meets these urgent demands of human nature and society is not only more practical, but more truthful, than that which looks upon the world as a dark, gloomy, disordered prison, filled with depraved wretches, whom it is the office of religion to rescue and transport to a better. Duty, in itself, is the main thing. We are not placed here to work for destiny, but for duty. If we are faithful in the latter, the former will care for itself.” (78)

THE GREAT IDEA OF THE AGE.

“The chief elements of Universalism are the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the plan of salvation to be fulfilled by Jesus, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, thus securing the rescue of all men from sin and error, and their introduction into the glorious liberty of the children of God. It embraces other elements; but these are the theological dogmas peculiar to the system, as distinguished from other systems of faith. When we maintain that this system enters into the departments of life and action as the prevailing idea, we do not mean that it is received as a dogma so much as a spirit. Theology lies at

the root of all religious action, doubtless, but the mass of people have few definite conceptions of it as a system, while they are actuated by it as a controlling power. A person may be fully imbued with its spirit, without being able to state clearly its distinctive features. Viewing it in this light, we see the influence of our faith everywhere.

"It is effecting great changes in the creeds of the different sects. The phraseology of their creeds may not have been altered, but they are essentially different as they exist in the minds of their advocates. The harsher features are softened down, the grosser parts are made more palatable, the absurd elements are made more rational, the elements of hostility removed, and a modifying influence thrown over the whole, making it more consistent, harmonious, and reasonable; and, in many cases, churches have deliberately changed the wording of their creed, so as to adapt it better to the growing liberality of the age. Public opinion has demanded this concession, and without it the church would dwindle away and die." ⁽⁵¹⁾

"The greatest obstacle in the way of social progress lies in the want of faith in ideas as the mighty power of God. . . . There is no power like the power of a great idea, — an idea that affects the mind's conceptions of God and his government; an idea that must interfuse itself into every portion of the life of the true believer; an idea that as effectually determines the duties of the soul as the idea of republicanism points out the relations of a people who receive it.

"As a denomination of Christians, Universalists have an *idea* that distinguishes them. If Universalism be *true*, no other *ism*, touching the *final* or eternal condition of the human family, can be true. If Universalism be *false*, there

is no *ism* touching the *final* or eternal condition of the human family that can give to the soul so beautiful, so sublime, so adorable a view of the Creator and his government, as that dream of error, and to this sad conclusion must we come, that the human soul is capable of rising to higher views and more benevolent interpretations of the ways of God than truth will justify.

“The importance of the idea of Universalism may well be considered, when the proposition is changed from the *true* statement, ‘All souls *shall* be saved,’ to one, that ‘All souls *may* be saved.’ The Bible statement is not, ‘All *may* be saved,’ but rather, ‘All *shall* be saved.’” (30)

THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSALISM.

“Our position means, that, for a century, upon the soil of this new-found continent, and among the institutions of a free people, the principles which we profess have had an ample range for their development. And when a faith is thus a hundred years old it ought to be ready for burial, or to renew a hearty, vigorous life. Dead or budding the stock must be. And if our Universalism has had its day, — only cumbering the ground, while the interests of humanity are at present passing into better hands, — our centenary must be its funeral. Let us bury it out of sight, where our marble or our bronze shall only preserve the epitaphs of its place and work now over. Perhaps, centuries hence, men will disinter it from the dust, and wonder, as when some stone giant is uncovered in the soil, if life ever thrilled in those limbs, or some cunning but unknown sculptor hid away so long ago this monster counterfeit.

“But our faith should be living, since its history is so

providential. I ask you to remember that it was not planted in an old world, but in the new West. It was not organized in the dull air of tyranny; but it was here, where the red man, receding from the shore, felt, as he gave way, the drifting foam of a great tidal wave of freedom better than his own. Universalism had for its ally the expansive character that always goes with a new people, — something large and generous in the American mind, like the scenery of the American's land itself. It had the practical character of the race to help it; and the energy that cleared off forests, opened mines, built cities and strung them upon rails and wires of iron from the Atlantic to the Pacific slopes, mated itself with the Gospel of the impartial grace of God. All this is simply grand. If Murray had chosen his age and place, he could have done no better. To be a golden thread in that history, most divinely woven; to be a part of those great forces which show the world its noblest empire, — what could he have desired more than this?

“And therefore it was to be true, that every victory of this new people of the West was to be a fresh laurel of our faith. The ideas of liberty and equality which thundered from the Revolution implied more than was consciously the purpose of the colonists who manned its guns. The long summer days of peace that shone over the early and middle presidencies nourished unhindered thought, ripened reasonable doubt, kindled broader love, in the theological world, while they made the nation's harvest-fields of wealth smile with gold. At last came the earthquake shock of the war which imperilled the nation's life. State lines bristled with bayonets; the whole seaboard rung with the cannon of forts and monitors; when, with one stamp

of liberty's foot, one gleam of her scabbardless sword, a million men rose in her defence. Yet, even then, the angel that directed the storm, the serene purpose that glowed behind the tempest, was the practical interpretation of the idea of which we are the custodians and guards. In the bright and joyful results for which our country hopes, none can claim deeper interest than we, since none can feel a greater right in the assured stability of institutions based upon our faith.

"Now, then, what have we done in these hundred years? We must take calmly the golden scales, and weigh the century's fruit. Our joy will be unreasonable, our offerings wasted, unless we can do this." (88)

"Now, every soul needs a body; ideas must have machinery. Universalism needs, must have, an organization. This leads to the second division of the subject,—our duty.

"1. First of all we owe a duty to the past. How much that we work by and enjoy comes from those who worked before us! In the steam-engine, the compass, and the printing-press, others labored, and we have entered upon their labors. So in religion. How much we owe to saints, apostles, and martyrs! We owe it to the past that we remember those who have toiled for us, that we imitate them by suitable action.

"2. We have duties in the present; we owe something to the present. Too many, having enough to spare in the present, are content to do whatever good they mean to do by their 'last will and testament.' But the time for action is in the present. Ante-mortem, not post-mortem, beneficence is demanded. Peter Cooper and George Peabody made the discovery that they could do something for

humanity while they lived; and their beneficence blessed them as well as mankind. With every man having the means it should be a joy, as it is a duty, to have a large, active sympathy with his time.

“3. But we have a duty for the future. Despite the materialism of the time, religion is getting to be more and more a matter of intelligent interest to men; and this especially on this continent, which is styled the reservoir of nature, — the receptacle of peoples from other portions of the globe. People are coming here from the East and from the West; and they are coming here to be helped, to be educated and lifted up to the plane of American ideas. The old Roman church is in danger from no cause so much as from its temptations to assume too much. But the spirit of progress cannot be stayed. Two Indians attempted to stop a rushing locomotive by stretching before it a buffalo hide. But the thing that stopped was not the engine! The speaker had no fear either of church assumption or of materialism. He claimed that our faith has the immense advantage of conceding the claims of reason, while it demands satisfaction for the importunities of the heart.

“The essential thing now, in this our centenary, is the kind of organization which will be efficient, which will tell for results. In the astronomical or geological calendar a hundred years is but a second. It is as a breath. But in the life of man it is a long period. At the time of Murray's arrival the world was being excited by taxes or stamps, and tipping tea into Boston harbor. Now a rail of iron unites the Atlantic with the Pacific shores. Cables cross the seas, and nations at distant parts of the globe are in instant communion; and the old sea, which was rolled back that the Israelites might cross, is united with the

Mediterranean. Even Egypt, the land of pyramids and tombs, is rising from its bed of sand, and becoming great with a modern civilization. At such a time we must put forth especial effort; for the hour is opportune. And we need not hide our work. 'What have you given?' was once a question which got this answer: 'That is nothing to nobody.' Let the world know that we do something. We can set no limit to the onward flow of the stream of beneficence we now set running. And in this, our centenary, we should take a position, and array our forces, so that the world shall both see, feel, and acknowledge us." (24)

UNIVERSALISM AND POLITICS.

"By Universalism, we refer to the spirit of that faith which the 'Universalist Quarterly' was established to advocate. By the politics of the age, we refer to the maxims of civil polity by which the statesmanship of our time is distinguished. As religion has been given, not only to determine the conduct and mould the character of individuals, but, through individuals, to determine the conduct and mould the character of States, the relations existing between politics and religion cannot be mistaken. However, they are not to be regarded as one and the same thing. They are as distinct as the sap and trunk of the tree. The fibres of the trunk are filled with the sap and convey it from the roots to the branches. The sap goes into the foliage, and makes buds, blossoms, and fruit. Religion is the spirit of divine truth, given to sanctify the world, — to direct to right results all life and conduct, whether of the individual or nation. Politics refer to those methods of State action by which the welfare and morality

of the people are promoted. And it is through these methods that the spirit of religion should flow, to give them the proper tendency, and to lead to fruitful results.

“ Husband and wife are distinctive in their individuality ; yet, by the bonds of wedlock, there is an important sense in which the twain become one flesh. Christ, in revealing the spirit of universal law, joined politics and religion in the holy bonds of marriage. Henceforth the nation that divorces its politics from the spirit of the Christian religion lives in a state of open and flagrant adultery. It forsakes its natural affinity of right and justice, and joins itself to the harlotry of worldliness and corruption. We cannot mistake the truth involved in these statements, if we will properly consider how constantly and inevitably politics and religion act and react upon each other. The political condition of a people always exerts an important influence upon, and has much to do in determining, their religious condition. The reverse of this proposition is equally true. The religious faith of a people, if it is worth anything, ought to give color and form to their political philosophy. And whether it be worth anything or not, such is always the result. . . .

“ 1. As Universalists, we believe in the moral government of God, in the exact justice of the administration of that government ; in the paternal nature of God’s character, and, therefore, in the paternal nature of the government over which he presides.

“ 2. We believe that under no circumstances will God fail to inflict a just penalty upon the guilty for every moral violation ; but since all punishment decreed and inflicted by a father who seeks the good of his children must be

remedial, we hold that God's punishments are temporary, and will, therefore, come to an end.

" 3. We look upon the world which we inhabit, as one which a father hath provided for us; upon the family of man inhabiting it, as one over which God justly claims paternity.

" 4. We believe that, whatever the hardships may be to which we are subjected, or the seeming evils through which we are occasionally called to pass, a Father ordains them, and will finally overrule them for our good. In short, we believe emphatically *in the fatherhood of God*, and, therefore, in its sequence, *the brotherhood of man*. This to us is the great central and practical doctrine of Christianity. It is the moral pivot upon which the system of Christian ethics hinges. Our faith and practice in everything of belief, of life, or of duty, should be made to harmonize with this doctrine. As neighbors, friends, or citizens; in all the relations we sustain, we are bound to square our conduct by the spirit of this important doctrine. It prescribes how we should live toward each individual, and, therefore, assists us in determining our obligations to our race.

" Practically, therefore, Universalism demands of those who believe it that they forgive as they hope to be forgiven.

" Before determining their duty to any given child of God, they have no right to ask, 'What party does the man belong to? Of what religious communion is he? Does he belong to my nationality? or, What is the color of his skin?' Nay, none of these considerations should restrain them from doing their whole Christian duty. If he is a human being, can laugh and cry, knows what sorrow is; if

he can be made to feel the sting of insult, or be crushed by injury and wrong; if he can be made to suffer at the hands of the violent, or smart under the lash of the oppressor, — they are bound as brethren, to befriend, and, if need be, defend him against all wrong-doers.

“This statement, we feel confident, will be accepted as substantially correct by those who accept and appreciate the spirit and purpose of Universalism. It is brief, and yet it is broad enough to comprehend all, it seems to me, that a good man can ask. It embodies the fundamental principles of all practical religion; nay, more, the very elements of all possible progress for the human race.” ⁽⁷¹⁾

REPUBLICANISM AND UNIVERSALISM.

“While thus preparing the way for Republicanism, God was also opening the path for Universalism. Men must be willing to do and to suffer, if need be, for the integrity of manhood, before they can be competent to understand a religious theory which acknowledges and builds upon this integrity. It may be said that I reverse the true order; that it is the development of the religious sentiment in man which prepares him to entertain broad political views. Be this as it may, — settle it as you please, you who are metaphysicians, — it is true that in this land the people were ready to shake off their subjection to a monarch before they were ready to come out from their bondage to priestly rule. And though it was a desire for religious freedom which founded this country, it is true that America is the only country on the face of the broad earth, where a true, pure, Christian liberality has made marked advancement.

It cannot, does not, grow and thrive, where the people's necks are under the sovereign's feet.

“In the providential time of preparations for the struggle for nationality, there came to these shores a humble man, purposing to seek retirement. Without the thought that he was called of God to preach his Gospel, — for proclaiming which he had been virtually banished from his native island, — John Murray believed the world not yet ready for the tidings which had been brought to him. Under circumstances quite as strange, quite as mysterious, quite as providential and seemingly miraculous as those which make Paul the chief apostle, did that man commence his ministry of the word, as he understood it. And the hundred years which have passed since the sermon was preached, in that little church on the sand-barrens of the New Jersey coast, have been marked by greater advances of the doctrine then and there preached, than ever before followed the promulgation of any new religious teaching. From that one church of 1770 we mark the steady growth of the doctrines therein preached, until 1870 shows us almost a thousand congregations which have espoused and openly avow their belief in, and support of, the views of the Christian Universalist church. The one preacher of 1770 is represented by more than six hundred preachers a century later. It has its denominational colleges, its theological schools, its academies; and the Universalist church is in that position to-day, that these words of its first inspired Preacher and Teacher may well apply to its members: ‘Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which

ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.' " (44)

"The *spirit* of Universalism animated the Revolution of 1776. We say this with no sectarian feelings. But it is our firm conviction that the leading principles of both are identical. The one applies democracy to the government of God, the other to the government of man. The doctrines of God's fatherhood, human brotherhood, and the equality of man, are the soul alike of both. The Christian and the republican spirit are the same.

"It is not meant by this that all those of the revolutionary period were technically of our faith. Religiously many of them were partialists. But they were political Universalists. In convention and in Congress they were conferring human equality and brotherhood; and, with strange inconsistency, they were at the same time devoutly affirming in their churches that God of his own good pleasure had predestinated some men and angels unto everlasting death. Thus were they engaged in applying one set of principles to the State, and another to their religion. But, thank God, the democracy of their hearts was stronger than the aristocracy of their creeds. They saw that men ought to be equal before the law, but failed to discover the proper reason for it, namely, because they are equal before God. It is because God has no ruling and serving races, in the aristocratic sense, that there should be none in the State. It is because God did not design that capital should own labor, that the State must not decree it. In other words, all true republican politics is simply the application of Universalist principles to the State.

"All movements in behalf of the common people, and against despotism, are in the same direction. 'In the

Reformation,' says the historian, 'the noble thought of the equality of all men, of a universal brotherhood in Christ Jesus, laid strong hold on those souls who for so long a period had groaned beneath the yoke of feudalism and the papacy of the middle ages.' The spirit of liberty and fraternity found its noblest expression in the Declaration of Independence. The doctrine of human equality, in its political aspect, culminated in the war of the Revolution. And the fathers of 1776 prayed and fought, although many times unconsciously, for a principle that was fatal to all the theology of their creeds and churches.

"There can be no doubt that General Washington himself possessed the broad and liberal spirit of this divine faith. He was not a sectarian. We do not claim him as a Universalist, — although his having been an Episcopalian was not inconsistent with such a claim, there being nothing in the thirty-nine articles in favor of endless misery.

"On the arrival of Washington to take command of the troops around Boston, the chaplains of the army petitioned him to remove Murray from the chaplaincy to which he had been appointed by General Varnum; but the commander-in-chief did not see fit to comply with their request. On the contrary, he confirmed the appointment already made, proclaiming Murray chaplain of the Rhode Island regiments, and ordered that 'he be respected accordingly.'

"It is agreeable to find such a spirit in those who toiled and bled in behalf of human rights. It is especially encouraging to us, as Universalists, to find so many of the leading minds stored with the convictions of a broad and generous Christian faith. When men labor and suffer for the equal rights of mankind, they labor and suffer for the great principles of our religion. These principles must

inspire both the American church and the American nation of the future.

“Christ will at last read the declaration of universal independence, and it shall be true, as written by a great French journalist, ‘The human race began in a unity, is governed as a unity, and must end in a unity.’ ‘Through discords of sin and sorrow, pain and wrong, truth,’ says Whittier, ‘rises, a deathless melody, whose notes of wailing are hereafter to be changed to those of triumph, as they blend with the great harmony of a reconciled universe.’” (52)

PART IX.

THE EXCELLENCY OF UNIVERSALISM.

THE EXCELLENCY OF UNIVERSALISM.

“THE value of religion consists chiefly in its usefulness, — in its excellence as a means to goodness and holiness. It would be of little worth if it did not purify the heart, exalt the character, and augment the sum of practical virtues, and increase the substantial happiness of men. It is a misconception of religion which makes it simply an atonement for future suffering, — a mere scapegoat from merited damnation. It must be a positive blessing to its believer, translating him from moral darkness into spiritual light, and transforming him from a misdirected and sinful life into one of heavenly excellence and peace. It must be in him the power of God unto salvation. It must regenerate him. And in proportion as it is true and excellent will it do these things; for it will be known by its fruits, — the superior quality and abounding quantity of them precisely is the justest criterion by which to determine its claims upon our attention.

“Now, I propose to speak to the question of the comparative excellence and worth of Universalism as a religion; to indicate, that is, why it is the more excellent way, and ought the more earnestly to be sought and lovingly embraced: —

"It is more excellent than any other religion in its adaptation to the nature of man. Its teachings are reasonable. Its doctrines are comprehensive. Its parts harmonize together.

"Universalism is more excellent than any other religion as a guide and incentive to duty. In order that duty may be well done, a man must be made to love it, to be moved cheerfully in its performance. To this end duty must appear in the most attractive light. It must be seen as the brightest and holiest path for the feet to tread in. Duty, interest, pleasure, must be linked into one. The paths of righteousness must be the paths of pleasantness and peace. The heart must feel its Christian vocation to be the most noble and divine. The man must be drawn to his labor by something in the labor itself, by something in his business, or connected with it, that will make him delight in his toil, and rest in the precious recompense of the answering consciousness. And all this, I say, Universalism does.

"Finally, Universalism will be more excellent in heaven, — in our immortal life, — for it will leave no work undone. No sinner shall finally be unsaved; but every one shall learn of Christ, and feel the regenerating might of his saving love and grace. God's holy law shall be lovingly obeyed by all. Every tongue shall be eloquent with praise. God's will shall be wholly done. Not a disobedient creature shall remain, not a blasphemous tongue, not an opposing will; but God shall be all in all. There shall be one fold and one shepherd." ⁽³²⁾

ITS NOBLEST EXPRESSION OF CHRISTIANITY.

“The noblest expression of religious faith possible to mind and heart is given by those who accept the sublime theory, and who are called by the name, of Universalists. No form of religious faith is at once so definite and assured as that which exhibits mankind as children of a universal Father, Parent, and Friend. All other theories of religion essentially fail where ours as completely and triumphantly succeeds. Nothing can be hoped for or desired by mankind in their noblest and their best estate, except the eternal harmony and reconciliation of all things in heaven and in earth. Universalism is the truest and most philosophical of all religions. It is wisdom personified in God and in Christ, and expressed in their attributes, nature, and character. God is Father, and man is child. Earthly relations are types of heavenly. The government of God is parental; and the obedience and submission of his children are required, because these are for their best good. Universalism forever ignores and rejects the tyrannical form of government. It is a theory of faith which neither spares the rod nor spoils the child; which, while declaring eternal enmity against sin, still loves the sinner. Indeed, it points to the stripes and chastisements it inflicts and permits for the evidence and proof it gives that the sinner is loved, and the sin alone hated.

“Universalism is a very imperfect and inadequate name for a most harmonious and philosophical system of divine truth. The name is the briefest, yet most comprehensive, one that can be given when we consider the magnitude of the objects and subjects embraced. It certainly expresses,

with the greatest possible brevity, the spirit of our blessed faith. That we aver to be universal in extent, in impression, in power. Universalism treats of an infinite purpose and plan, confined to no sect, race, or clime, but embracing in its unequalled benefits and blessings universal humanity. The glorious pillars upon which our spiritual fabric rests are faith, hope, and charity. 'But the greatest of these,' as saith the apostle, 'is charity.' Therefore, its strength and inspirations are enforced and expressed in a divine and catholic charity.

"Think of what is signified by this name and this faith. Think of the comforting and consoling truths it implies and embodies. Think of the conditions it enjoins and the promises it makes, — conditions and promises worthy alike of Creator and created, of parent and of child. When we reflect upon what Universalism is, and upon what it seeks to accomplish; when the glorious vision arises of the sublime results it will surely achieve for humanity, we are 'lost in wonder, love, and praise.' In view both of the promises and blessings it exhibits, how can any, possessing this faith, be ashamed to confess, to honor, to defend?

"Finally, we remark that this glorious sentiment of Universalism is advancing in the minds and hearts of men. This symmetric faith which we preach and defend is achieving victories on every hand. It assails hoary errors in church and in state, and these crumble and fall before it. As a pervading and beneficent spirit, it is embodying and expressing itself in science, in literature, and in art, — in the noblest monuments genius is rearing, in story and in song, in history and in philosophy. In all that men do and are in the generation that records their progress and their march, the spirit, if not the letter, of our blessed faith

is most manifest. Poet and painter, sculptor, historian, novelist, philosopher, every embodiment of science and every expression of art, — in thoughts, in words, in deeds, — bear universal testimony to the incarnation of our triumphant faith. God hasten the dawning of the day when it shall have achieved its last and noblest victories; yea, when its final triumph shall have come; when hope shall have flowered into fullest fruition; when the redemption and reconciliation of humanity shall complete the kingdom of Christ and of God; yea, when ‘God himself shall be all in all.’ ” (112)

A NEW ARGUMENT FOR UNIVERSALISM.

“Now, it is a grand thing for any people to have arisen with a distinctive idea in the Christian church, — so distinctive as to have caused them to stand apart from all the rest, if not by their own will, then by the will of others, who would not have them stand together. It is a grand thing, I say, to have such a distinctive idea, and to have stood forth and battled for it, and even though, after one hundred years, we but now find ourselves with an assured position in the church, yet if, after that one hundred years, we stand upon an assured position, conceded by all Christian people, within the lines and bounds of the Christian church, then, I say, it is a grand thing for any one to have had any part in such a conflict; and to-day it is a grand thing to have a part in this celebration of the victory which we have achieved in securing that position in the future.

“And now, I wish to say this one thing, which I believe to be a new argument that to-day has been completed in the heart of Universalism, and which furnishes a sufficient

cause for the existence of the denomination as a distinctive branch of the church. I mean this, — that we have been the educator of the world upon one of the most important questions which to-day is agitating the minds of the religious people of this country ; I mean, more particularly, the liberal-minded religious part of the Orthodox churches of the land. Where there is not a profound conviction that the theology is true, and that everything is an error, there is necessarily a query existing in the mind as to whether the old dogmas of the church are really essential to the existence of the church, or to the truth and goodness which the church has in its care. If, therefore, we as a people have demonstrated this grand truth, which I believe we have, then we have achieved one of the momentous successes of the religious age in which we live ; namely, we have shown to the world that there can be a Christian church rooted and grounded in the Christian Scriptures, firmly attached to the one rock, Jesus Christ ; and with all the spirit, with all the energy, with all the consecration, with all the self-sacrifice that are essential to carry forward the religious and the educational movements of our period, without any one of the old motives to piety, to self-sacrifice, or for obedience to God which the Orthodox church, even in its liberal forms, maintains are necessary to-day. I say, we stand before the world as a Christian church, utterly bereft of and having cast away all the old hopes of heaven for having done our duty, and all the old fears of hell if we do not do our duty. Therefore we stand before the world in this new aspect, of a church grounded in the Scriptures, loyal to Jesus Christ, and yet going forward with zeal and determination to do the work of the church of Jesus Christ, and establish his kingdom in the earth, without any

of those old motives and incentives which we have been told so many times are absolutely essential to the perpetuity and maintenance of a Christian church in this wicked world.

“I say, this is wherein we are more than any other branch of the Christian church to-day; and I tell you, I maintain that it is a *new argument for Universalism*; for if we can prove, as we are now able to demonstrate, that the doctrine of endless damnation is a useless doctrine in an educated land, then we have shown to the world a new argument, which utterly does away with that which God has no longer any need of in this world, and which especially man has no longer any need of. However we may regard, in the light of general intelligence, the existence of certain old erroneous ideas and dogmas, in the discipline and education of the world, yet, when the world grows to that point wherein it discerns that the old idea is an error, then the world casts it aside, while still the grand and noble movements of the world go on without it, although that idea may have been held and cherished as a profound truth by those who have been engaged in the noblest works and reforms of the world.” (140)

THE UTILITY OF UNIVERSALISM.

“A belief in the utility of any religious truth can rest on no higher evidence than that which is involved in the consideration itself, that the truth believed to be useful is a truth. We have a right to assume, without any attempt at proof, that whatever God has seen fit to reveal to his creatures will, for the very reason that he has revealed it, be of service to them. If God reveals one of his purposes to

man, it is our right, and, we may add, our duty, to presume that he perceives good will result to man from a knowledge of that purpose. The Divine Being himself is the judge as to what is best men should know, and what is best they should not know. If, therefore, God in any way, and in any particular, has made his truth accessible to men, we are safe in the assumption that it will be of service to men.

“The argument in proof of the utility of Universalism is simply this : a living faith in the principles of Christian Universalism will make men wiser, holier, and happier, *just so long as they have this living faith*. Theoretically, the doctrine implies that the time will come when all men will have in a perfect degree this *living faith*, and hence will all become finally wiser, and holier, and happier. Is it, then, asked, if all men are ultimately, through the efficiency of a living faith, to be holy and happy, what necessity is there for laboring to imbue men with this living faith here on earth?

“We answer, the very same reason, which makes it desirable that men should have a living faith after the event of death, makes it desirable that they should have the same faith before death ; the very reason that makes it desirable that men should be holy and happy in the world to come, makes it desirable that they should, as far as possible, become holy and happy in the present world.

“Our position is this : Universalism, or a living faith in God’s love and wisdom, ultimately overcoming all sin and suffering, is desirable *in itself*, desirable every moment, desirable in one world as much as in another, desirable in the world to come for the same reason that it is desirable in the world that now is ; and it is desirable for the reason

that in this moment and the next moment, in this place and in every place, in this world and in every world, it alone can give the joy of faith, — joy unspeakable and full of glory. If, as we here are permitted to assume, it can give this joy in eternity, it can give it now, and *this is* the reason why we are resolved to labor for it now. We urge, as an explanation of our zeal in its propagation, its *utility*, its moral and spiritual use, both for the present world and for the world to come.” (30)

THE WORTH OF UNIVERSALISM.

“What is Universalism worth? More than most of even its professed believers realize. The world needs its softening and redeeming influence in every department of life, — in business, politics, and social relations. Where can we find the laws of duty, of an unimpeachable morality, of true politeness, so fully explained, as in our interpretation of Christianity? We need individually, also, to be constantly reminded of the fact, that amid all life’s trials we are in a loving Father’s care; that amid its pleasures we are not to wrap ourselves up in our selfishness, forgetful that all are members of one great family, and there are many who need our sympathy and assistance; that we are not placed here for idle ease, but to labor for, and with, the Master, in the work of comfort and redemption. Pleasure we may have, but the best kind can never be secured through selfish gratification, — only by living for others, while we live for ourselves.

“When we look around upon the world, and see so much that we cannot understand, — sin, suffering, the triumph of wrong for a season, — with what a cheering power

comes the thought, 'Our Father is still with his children; and nothing can occur to ultimately harm one of them!' No doubt, no fear, through this belief; only perfect trust.

"And now that we have such a faith committed to us, for our own and others' benefit, what are we doing, or what are we willing to do, to show our gratitude for its blessings, and to carry out its spirit? We have noble, true souls among us, who are doing much; but can there not be a vast deal more accomplished, if all who profess to believe in Universalism would do their part fully, and those who are ashamed to profess their belief would honestly own their conviction and labor where they ought? Of this we may be assured, that, 'having much given to us, of us much will be required.' If the truth, in its purity, has dawned upon our minds, and we are false to its teachings, we will deserve and receive condemnation. No 'Well done' for such, though they attend ever so regularly upon the services of a church that should never be their Sabbath home.

"But, even among those who attend our churches, how many devote as much time and means as they might do to the cause of Universalism? Some of the early Christians gave up all,—their earthly possessions, hope of worldly gain, and life itself, for the Gospel. Are we ready to be as faithful? But, if so much as that is not required of us, are we willing to do what we ought?

"This is our centenary year. Our pastors, with earnest efforts, are striving to lead their people into the spirit of the year. Shall we not accomplish more this year than in many of the past combined? Our ancestors waged a severe contest against Orthodoxy. The contest is by no

means ended, but enough has been gained to ensure certain success, if we labor as persistently as they. One hundred years of earnest toil, of brave encounter with grave errors, have resulted in very much gained for the truth. Let us take courage and make our present work tell upon the strongholds of error.

“But let us remember that only as we live the doctrine will Universalism accomplish much good through us. Let us not talk about the worth of Universalism, unless we show our appreciation of its value by lives consecrated to its service.” (112)

ITS GREAT VALUE.

“The value of Universalism is seen to the best advantage when we *compare* it to all other systems in relation to man’s future destiny, — systems which leave it all uncertain. It is our greatest desire to inculcate a faith that delivers man from the fear and bondage of death, to which so many are subject all their lifetime. And none but those who have been delivered from this bondage, and elevated into the clearer light of Universalism, can realize the blessedness it conveys, or appreciate the truthfulness of the language of the apostle when he speaks of ‘the joy unspeakable and full of glory.’ that flows from faith in the Gospel of the blessed Saviour. The writer of this article has been under the cloud, and emerged into the light of God’s universal grace, and he is free to say that no consideration that earth could offer would tempt him to part with his present faith, and go back to that in which he was educated. It is ‘more precious than gold, and all the things that are to be desired are not to be compared to it.’

If such value is the experience of others, and if such is the value of that faith which opens the prospect of the redemption of the world, it might well be expected that Universalists would be a peculiar people, zealous for the faith, and above all others diligent and earnest in its support. And yet we greatly fear that there are few of us who estimate it at a tithe of its value.

“Faith, like all other gifts and graces, needs exercise and culture, in order to grow to full perfection and beauty ; and there are few mistakes more pernicious than that which makes a man imagine that, once having tasted the bread and water of life, he hath need of no more culture or exercise of faith for a lifetime. The truth is, faith must be exercised and nurtured, else it becomes weak and languid.” (14)

“Let a freedom to investigate Universalism become general, and who does not see how mightily our word would grow ; how fast the disciples of Universalism would increase ? Take away the false idea that any solicitude to know the truth of Universalism is a sin, and a grievous sin, and no words of promise can be too strong to set forth the increase of believers. But chains are riveted on thousands of souls. They dare not think of *its value*, lest their lips should betray them in some unguarded hour. They are kept in ignorance of the true grounds of our doctrine, and are told that some one in the town ‘has tried to believe Universalism, but died renouncing it ;’ as though that could be renounced which never had been believed !” (20)

“Viewing life as it is ; knowing as we do how vastly short this world is of perfection ; how much there is needed to make it good and peaceful, — how sweet to think, that at last, amid all the jargon and disappointment of the pres-

ent, there is to be a *final glorious end*, — a heaven of rest for all at last! No one can really contemplate the actual condition of life, without his thoughts reaching on, and desiring, yea, praying for, such a glorious result. All hope to pass to a more perfect state; and it seems absolutely necessary that universal salvation should be true, to give the necessary calmness to life, and enable its trials to be endured.

“And Universalism comes, in all its beauty and value, to give the needed rest. It comes like the breath of spring over the dreary shades of winter; like the voice of some known friend when dangers gather thick around us. It has bid thousands, and still bids all men, to come, and feast on her stores of infinite pleasure, through a Father’s love. Sweet Universalism! Mid shocks and tumults, strife and confusion, grief and pain, sorrow and death, of this life, it comes, pointing out a heaven of rest for the weary, a world of joy for the sorrowing, a home of consolation for the mourner; and all after the distracting scenes of this life shall have passed away.” ⁽¹¹⁰⁾

WHY WE LOVE UNIVERSALISM.

We love Universalism because it points us to a heavenly home, and reveals it as the inheritance of all. This world is a world of trial and suffering. Here, we have no continuing city, and we love *that* the best, which reveals our heavenly home the clearest, and makes it a *sweet home* of joy and peace for every child of God.

“Reader, do you love Universalism? We love the doctrine with all our heart. It is, to us, a *noble* doctrine; it is that doctrine which is ‘according to godliness.’ In our

view, no other doctrine is so honorable to God, or so worthy the belief and support of man. Based as it is on the ROCK OF AGES, — on the clearest teachings of the word of God, — it is just the doctrine which is needed by the world. Here we see men ‘alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts.’ We see poor, weak, erring mortals. Everywhere is the blight of sin. It has cast its stains over the fairest portions of the habitable globe. No soul has escaped its ravages. ‘*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*’

“And what doctrine do we need as sinners? Do we need to be taught that God *hates*, or that God *loves*, us? That God is our *enemy*, or that God is our *friend*? Do we need to be taught that he will, or will not, cast off forever? That his mercy is temporary, or that it is everlasting? That he is just, or unjust? That he is a father, or a tyrant? Evidently, our views of God, and of his purposes concerning us, will materially affect our conduct towards him; and we can never be made to love God by being told that he is our enemy. No! God must be to us ‘altogether lovely,’ before we can ‘love him with all the heart.’ And the Apostle John says, ‘We love him because he first loved us.’

“Now, Universalism is based upon love; infinite love, — the ‘love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.’ We heartily believe all those sayings, which speak of God as ‘long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy,’ as ‘forbearing and forgiving,’ as ‘kind even to the evil and the unthankful.’ And it is because we regard God as so infinitely lovely, that our souls rise up to call him blessed: ‘Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us unto a

lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' Yes! 'God is love,' tender love. And 'in this was commended the love of God, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' And 'if God spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?'

"Again, Universalism comes home to the *heart*. It appeals to all that is *good* in men; all that is *godlike*. As the apostle says, 'The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach.' We preach a doctrine which the *heart* delights in; not that '*carnal* mind which is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be;' but the *pure heart*, in which the love of God is shed abroad. No man who has really *tasted* the love of God can believe that he is *partial*, or that he will *endlessly punish* any of his children! No! It is from a *want of love* that men teach *this* doctrine. *True* love delights only in *blessing*; never in *cursing*. We love Universalism, therefore, because it comes home to the love of our hearts. We do not fear to welcome it *heartily*. It is all we desire." (a)

"I love the blessed doctrine of the restitution. I love it for its peaceful hopes and sweet consolation. 'When with rainy eyes we write sorrow upon the green graves of those with whom we have held sweet communion on earth, we, as Universalists, have an unfaltering hope of a re-union' in that better home, where the Father will wipe all tears away, and take to his own loving heart the lost prodigal, penitent and happy. For this hope we prize our faith.

"We love it, too, because it encourages the hope of universal harmony and reconciliation in the universe of God.

We always have a bright future before us, where no discordant notes are heard ; where sorrow never sheds a tear, sin never casts a shadow, and where the sun of the soul's happiness knows no decline, no eclipse. And is not this hope essential to perfect our joy and our trust?

“ For this assurance we love Universalism. But we prize it more for its redeeming power. It gives us such views of the goodness of God and the destiny of man, that our rebellious souls are constrained to say : —

“ Lord, thou hast won ! at length I yield !
My heart, by mighty grace compelled,
Surrenders all to thee ;
Against thy terrors long I strove ;
But who can stand against thy love ? —
Love conquers even me.”

“ May we all appreciate our faith. As we go out into the world, to discharge its duties, buffet its storms, and brave its trials, let us remember that integrity of soul and unyielding devotion to principle are required of all believers in the great salvation.

“ And, by living in harmony with the teachings and spirit of the Master, we increase our own joy. It will make us happy in life. It will be a sweet soother of our cares when adverse winds blow, and the earth grows dark. It will be a minister of consolation to us in the hour of death, and enable us to quit the world, ‘ like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.’ ‘ Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.’ ” ⁽¹¹⁸⁾

“ Universalism will prove an irresistible religious power in the world when its grand ideas and doctrinal truths

shall be associated with a higher type of piety, and a more powerful spirit in the life of its followers. Philanthropy is a holy love. Deeds of charity, wrought out under the inspiration of a tender sympathy, are beautifully Christian. Honesty in business is a noble virtue, but with these practical works should be a devout and worshipful spirit, a blessed recognition of God as supreme, unto whom all praise is due.

“We love Universalism. It is a most blessed religion. We cling to it with nervous energy as our grand hope, without which we could not keep our courage in life’s great struggle, without which we could not bury our dear ones in peaceful assurance of reunion, or yield ourselves in quiet resignation to the awaiting summons of death. Universalism is everything to us, — our sunshine in darkness, our day in night, our peace in storm, our strength in conflict, our blessed way to the Father when, tired, faint, and weary, we would rest a while in the arms of his love. Thus loving Universalism, we would become more efficient apostles of it, more perfect mediums of its spirit, and more self-sacrificing in devotion to its work.” (67)

UNIVERSALISM A POSITIVE THEOLOGY.

“Universalism is a *positive* theology, and has met with a splendid success, not because it has combated and beaten a few pernicious errors, but because there is at the core of it a *vital* truth which urges it forward and enthrones it in the popular heart. If I knew nothing more of it than its success, if I did not know a principle which it embodies, or a sentiment which it enfolds, I should say that it is a *positive* element in the religious world; for, mark its progress,

its triumph over the organized opposition it has met, — a triumph which is not outward merely, but over the heart; for everywhere you will hear men say: 'It is a blessed doctrine, and full of consolation and hope for those who believe it;' everywhere you will see the weary heart, the sin-sick spirit, turning to it as a last refuge, as a support when everything else fails.

"Universalism recognizes the right of man to be cared for here, and to be saved hereafter, which no doctrine has done before; and he is cared for with a breadth of benevolence, and a sweep of charity, and a tenderness of love, which rival the tender sympathy of the Son of God. Universalism regards the vicious and criminal with forgiving pity, which no theology had done before it; and see how the prison-cell has been sanctified by the presence of the holiest love, and the haunts of vice made radiant with the sweet ministrations of an all-embracing charity, which gathers up its garments so that they be not soiled in the effort, and stoops down to the lowliest, and lifts them up, and inspires them with hope, and helps them with a strong arm, and with prayer. And I know that Universalists, if they did not inaugurate these movements, are active in them, and that under every one of them lies a principle which belongs exclusively to our faith; therefore, I say, that Universalism is a positive power in the world, — a positive theology, — the power of God unto salvation.

"It is supposed that Universalism derives its power from a single thought, the ultimate salvation of all men. But it is not so. That is, indeed, a grand thought. How the providence of God widens and glows with a divine purpose, as we view it in the light of that thought! With what dignity it invests the meanest soul! How the abused

spirit, ensepulchred in a gross lump of clay, expands and bursts its cerements, and rises to the bright fields of immortal bliss, as we look upon it in the light of that faith! What a bright halo it casts over life and mortality, helping us to bear our trials, and lifting us by joyful anticipations into communion with angels! But I repeat that it is not the idea that has given us power in the world, that has helped us to our progress. That is a tributary to another thought, which, in its practical effect upon humanity, is grander than that. It is this: God is our Father. We are brethren. Heaven is our eternal home!" (65)

"As men want a well-defined faith, so do they love a brave, resolute declaration of it. They will sooner embrace error, squarely stated and vigorously affirmed, than truth uttered in feeble tones, or with a supplicating, compromising air. The one will have the earnestness of conscious sincerity; the other the feebleness of suspected falsity. Vigor is communicative; but one will not be vigorous unless his convictions are well defined and well assured. A doubting or hesitating assertion never begets enthusiasm, and never will. It is born only of firm, unquestioned faith. We love to hear one say, I believe, or I do *not* believe, a given proposition." (66)

"Positive Universalism is the distinct assertion of the doctrine of the final salvation of all. It is the belief that 'God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.' Around this doctrine, we, as a denomination, have rallied and organized. We feel it to be our duty to proclaim it to the world, as it is the duty of every sect to labor for the advancement of its own views of truth. The Bible, to us, is a Universalist book; Christ was a Universalist; the apostles were Universalists; Uni-

versalism was the doctrine of the prophets of old; for 'God hath spoken of the restitution of all things by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.' Acts iii. 21.

"This, then, to us, is the doctrine of the Bible. And with this view, why should we not preach it? Why should we be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ? Is it not 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth'? And is there any 'other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ'? Is not he 'the author and the finisher of our faith'? Are we not to be 'rooted and grounded in him'? Surely, if Christ was a Universalist, we need not hesitate to believe as he did; neither, from the fear of the censure of men, should we conceal our opinions, and sanction a doctrine which at heart we abhor. An honest man can take but one course, and that is the course of frank avowal. If we can say 'We are Christians,' we can say 'We are Universalists.' It costs no more effort to say the latter, than to say the former. And why should we be ashamed of the name Universalist, if the doctrine is true? Is it not an expressive name? Is there any other which is pleasanter to the ear, or which is more suggestive? Because of unpopularity, shall we refrain from avowing the truth? Christianity itself was once unpopular; the Reformation was unpopular. The best things, indeed, have at first been unpopular. Truth has to make its way slowly along.

"The tendencies of the times, if we do not mistake, are decidedly in favor of a different theology,—the theology of Universalism. This is seen in all the churches. Orthodoxy to-day is not what it was in the days of Calvin. Arminianism to-day is not what it was in the days of

Arminius. There has been progress in theology, as in everything else; and that progress has been in the direction of Universalism. Hence, to be ashamed of Universalism is to be ashamed of that around which the hopes of the world are centring; towards which all sects are rapidly gravitating." (61)

THE CLAIMS OF UNIVERSALISM.

The claims of a theory upon the public mind depend somewhat on the nature and character of its foundation; upon its utility and importance, as a power for good in the elevation of mankind to the highest standard of morality and spiritual greatness. It must be conceded as a truth in morals, as in the sciences, that a religious theory has no claims on man for belief, if it does not rest upon a *good* foundation. It should be both reasonable and scriptural, and adapted to the wants and conditions of the human soul in every relation in life. It must be in harmony with the laws of God; with his character and government, and the object of Christ's mission. Such is the theory of Universalism; for it is a noble and generous sentiment, filling the heart of the believer with trust in God, and a life of immortal blessedness beyond the grave. (c)

"We do not claim that Universalism, as held by any living Universalist, embraces all truths, not even all Christian truths. Such a claim would assume that the treasures of divine wisdom are exhausted. It would assume that perfection of mind and character has been attained. Nor do we claim that what we all agree to as Universalism is absolutely devoid of error. We cannot conceive it any more possible for a finite and progressive mind to be free

from mistake of judgment and belief, than for such a mind to be perfect in its attainments.

“What we claim is simply this; that Universalism in its essential particulars is the highest and most complete interpretation yet reached of the Christian religion. Not to be able and willing to avow such a claim would be an inconsistency in the most vital point of our profession. We take the name of Universalist. We are set for the defence of Universalism. When, therefore, we cannot, with mind, heart, and will, defend Universalism as the highest and most complete interpretation of Christianity yet reached, we should take a different position, and labor under a different name.” ⁽³⁰⁾

THE WORKING CAPACITY OF UNIVERSALISM.

“One of the best recommendations for any system of religion is its working capacity. If a religion seems perfect in theory, yet fails in practice, it is of but little value to men. If a faith is apparently strong in its self-assertions and fortifications, and yet feeble in its work of moulding men and character, it serves the world but poorly. If it professes much, and does not do the works meet for such a profession, it has but little to recommend it to sympathy and support. Working capacity is the test of usefulness, and the great final argument which is to settle the question of the success and permanency of every religious system.

“The religion which works most and best will be most successful, and ultimately regarded as truest. Work is a hard argument to resist. Work is a strong opponent to overcome. It is a competitor that wins almost every field.

It wields the sword of victory and bears the spoils from almost every scene of conflict. Work is God's ordinance, and it belongs to his religion. It is the right hand of mercy which gathers the fruits of salvation in the garden of the Lord.

"Work is a quick agent; truth is slower. Work is active to-day; truth waits till to-morrow. Work takes advantage of time; truth lets time take advantage of it. Work secures pennies; truth lets dollars slip. Work is up by daylight; truth lies till sunrise. So work distances truth by its sheer activity. Truth is over-confident and trusts all to the innate power of right; work is distrustful and lets no opportunity slip for an advantage. Work, therefore, is always successful when other things are equal.

"Universalism, perhaps, is more deficient in work than in other qualities of value, as are all truthful systems from their restful leaning upon the truth. It inclines to the error of over-confidence in the efficient power of its truth and righteousness. It trusts too much to the immediate power of God, and the efficient rationality of man for seeing and doing the right, and waits too patiently for the results which work alone can secure speedily. Knowing itself right, it waits too willingly for the people to become right. Holding the truth, it rests too contentedly in it. It falls into the common error of applying the poetic prophecy, 'Truth is mighty and must prevail,' to the active present. Truth is mighty; but its power is silent and slow. Truth will prevail; but its season of triumph is far in the future.

"Yet, Universalism has been and is at work with a vigorous hand. It has had a rough country to possess, fortified

at every point, defended by strong arms and organized and disciplined hosts. It has had a powerful enemy to overcome, — an enemy not only prepared, and strong, and numerous, but one stimulated with enmity to its doctrines and a bitter hatred of its claims. It has had to possess the land inch by inch, and maintain its ground against the combined plans and energies of all other systems and sects. It has stood alone battling for its truth, for a place to live and work, for a name, a people, and a church. Having secured a name to live, and a house to live in, it has gone vigorously at work for human redemption.” (82)

AS A PURPOSE AND A POWER.

“We are not without encouraging symptoms that the practical uses of Universalism are coming more distinctly into the foreground. And my position is, that the time has fully come when Universalism, *as a faith*, should have ripened into Universalism *as a purpose and a power*. I do not, in this, mean to say that the doctrine is no longer to be enjoyed ; I simply say that the attainment of the enjoyment must no longer be our object. The happiness will come, but it must come incidentally ; it must not be sought, only as a result. The question now presses, What shall we do with Universalism ? To what great purpose must it give vitality and effect ? And here let us by no means fail to perceive the fundamental fact, that our theology, if of any real worth, must tell us what to do. We are not first to find out what is to be done, and then hunt up a theology that will enable us to do it.

“It would contribute nothing special to our present purpose, to say what, of course, we should assume to be cor-

rect, — that Universalism aims to induce holiness of life; for every other theology would make the same claim, and, with certain qualifications, the claim in every case would be just. It comes much nearer the essential facts to say that our theology purposes to make men holy from principle rather than from policy, — that is to say, not for the reward of being holy, not to avoid the punishment of being unholy, nor with a view to any ulterior good, but simply for holiness itself. But even this answer does not seem to present the radical effects in their consecutive relations. It will prepare the way for a more satisfactory statement, if we consider the fact, that Universalism acknowledges the essential rectitude of the human soul, — assuming that its depravity is not in its elementary substance, but in the virus of hereditary corruption, and the more culpable taint of voluntary disobedience. In other words, the soul has parted with the natural health, and disease, both as a misfortune and as a sin, rests upon it. All that is asked is, that the soul may become true to itself, — be strengthened by its own life, and perfected by its own growth, under the helping, inciting, and encouraging influences of divine truth. And we believe that our theology, by its corrective influences, opens the soul to the light of heavenly love; brings it gradually, and, in the end, completely into the presence of God, so that the stream of holiness flows from it as sweet waters flow from a healthy fountain, diffusing a verdure and exhaling a fragrance along the whole course of the perfected life. I say, then, that Universalism, in its practical relations to the human soul, *purposes to give spiritual health.*

“If, in the remarks thus far offered, it has been made to appear, with a degree of distinctness, that, under the

circumstances of our day and generation, Universalism, to be of any worth, must be recognized, not merely as a faith to rejoice the heart, but also, and primarily, as a purpose and power, — as a purpose pointing to a higher ideal of excellence, and a power giving the pledge that the attainment of such excellence is possible, — there can hardly be occasion for a formal statement of the obligation resting on those whose profession it is to commend the doctrine to their fellow-men.” (30)

ITS DISTINCTIVE FEATURE.

“The *distinctive* feature of Universalism is that it affirms the broadest and loftiest sentiments concerning God and humanity the mind is capable of receiving. When Paul affirms that the word of truth contained in the Gospel is ‘in thy heart and in thy mouth,’ we understand him to declare that the highest aspirations of the heart, and the most generous expression of the lips are in the direction of truth. We find the highest test of truth, therefore, in this, that the best thing we are capable of conceiving is also the truest thing. Hence the peculiarity of Universalism is not so much in its dogmatism as in its direction; and its dogmatism is not so much in affirming the specialities of a creed, as in affirming certain fundamental principles whose truth rests on their harmony with the Infinite. The universe comprehends all material things united by a common law to a common centre; and Universalism comprehends the whole round of truth flowing from the infinite fountain of all good. So far as it attempts to bring this infinite truth within the grasp of infinite minds, and apply it to a solution of the problems of duty and destiny, it consists in the

logical statement of certain universal propositions which compose its creed. The peculiar features of the Universalist creed, as found in the Winchester Confession, and all other authorized expositions, are contained in such broad, yet specific, statements as these : God is one, the possessor of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, the creator, governor, and disposer of whatever exists. Mankind is one, of common origin, nature, and relationship to God. Jesus Christ is one, the common Lord of men, and Saviour of sinners. The law of duty is one, making common demand for the love of all souls to the one Father and the one brotherhood. Destiny is one, the common heavenly home to which all will at last return, through whatever wanderings and discipline. Less than this is not the best we are able to conceive, and therefore is not truest ; better than this we have not yet been able to attain unto.

“ All religious systems turn to God as the author of our being, but no other can give a satisfactory answer to the question, Why did he make us as we are? When told that he made us merely to satisfy his own sovereign rule, regardless of our interest or destiny, we revolt against it as in the last degree tyrannical and unjust. When told it was only by way of experiment, that, by placing us in a state of probation, he might ascertain what he would do, we are compelled to protest against such weakness and folly. No statement will satisfy either the head or heart, save that he made us to be the constant recipients of his fatherly affection and bounty.

“ All religious systems recognize the social instincts, and commend kindly and generous sentiments towards each other ; but no other system lays a foundation broad and deep enough to sustain the law of universal love. When

told that human nature is totally corrupt, averse to all good, and inclined to all evil, we are not only crushed under a sense of our own moral impotency, but feel that here is justification for all the meanness of our own lives, and for all the hatred, warfare, and cruelty of the world. When we are told that while some are the children of God, others bear towards him no such relationship, and hence are utterly outcast from his love, we feel that the bands of sympathy are broken, and that prisons and tortures are the rightful portions of such vile wretches. Only when we look on all men as our brothers, bearing an indestructible image of God enstamped upon them, and holding towards him an inalienable sonship, can we embrace them all in the arms of our affection, and labor for their regeneration with an unflinching courage." (10)

PART X.

THE POPULARITY OF UNIVERSALISM.

UNIVERSALISM GROWING POPULAR.

“YOUR attention is next directed to the fact that Universalism as a faith is fast becoming the evangelical creed of Christendom. Many of the best minds, the profoundest scholars, the ablest theologians, of this country and of Europe, are adopting it. Nearly the whole Unitarian church has accepted it. The Episcopal church is full of it. It is largely represented in every Orthodox church in the land. The standard literature of the day is saturated with its spirit, and its central idea glows upon the pages of our best authors. Universalism runs smoothly and naturally off the pen of Mrs. Stowe, and off the pen of her brother, Henry Ward Beecher. Dickens writes it down in his books, and makes it the soul of his Christmas carols; Longfellow sings it in his ‘Psalm of Life;’ Whittier rehearses it in his ‘Tent on the Beach;’ and great-hearted men and women chant it in the sweet choral of their loving deeds. It is fast growing into a universal belief. The whole drift of theological thought and sentiment is towards it, and souls yearning for better views of God and of the life immortal are turning their wistful eyes towards this best, this divinest interpretation of the Gospel ever given to the world.” ⁽¹⁴⁴⁾

. . . "We now put the other side of the question: Who believes in universal salvation? To us, the answer is plain and positive, namely, All good men and women, everywhere, believe it. It matters not what creed they have subscribed to; to what church they belong; by what denominational name they may be called,—they believe this great truth in their very hearts. They may not know it themselves; education may have filled their minds with many prejudices against the name of Universalism; social influences and pride of wealth and position may keep them from our churches; but still, in their hearts is the conviction that the good Father in heaven will care for and save all his children at last. Not having made themselves acquainted with the doctrine, nor our methods of interpreting the Scriptures, they may find many passages which seem to prove a different doctrine. These are stumbling-blocks, in their way, and cause many doubts and fears, we admit; but, in spite of all these hindrances, their hearts still believe there is somewhere a happy home for all.

"And, more than this, they love to hear it preached; it is a balm to the soul. They are never so happy in their church as when their minister forgets his creed and talks of God's kindness and the salvation of men. It is a well-known fact that the most liberal ministers in the evangelical churches are the most popular. Those churches whose ministers are accused of leaning towards Universalism, and who are censured by a few of the most bigoted of their hearers, are always well filled, and often overflowing. Such ministers are sought after by most of our popular churches, and command the largest salaries everywhere. The people do believe Universalism, and love to hear it preached.

“Recently a prominent Universalist attended a Congregationalist church in one of our Connecticut cities, there being no service at his own church that morning. The next day the Universalist was met by a member of the Congregationalist church, who asked, ‘Was not that a good Universalist sermon our minister preached yesterday?’ Brother W. answered, ‘Yes, that was good Universalism, and a fine sermon too.’ — ‘Did you like the discourse?’ — ‘Yes, I thought it excellent,’ was the reply.

“Universalism is not objectionable, if preached from an Orthodox pulpit. It is the *name* which frightens them; the *sentiment* they love.” ⁽²¹⁾

The foregoing selections show in what way Universalism has grown popular; and that it is still growing more popular in other respects and directions these pages will testify. The truth is always growing more popular, if the people are growing more intelligent; for, with the increase of knowledge, there will be a desire to investigate, and learn what is truth.

When we speak of the popularity of Universalism, we mean, first of all, that there is a feeling in the community to give us credit for what we are, for what we have done, and to learn for themselves what we believe and teach. As the spirit of our doctrine enters into all the great reforms of the day, it must exert an influence in the world, and with this influence there will be a tendency towards the light of noonday. Society will grow more charitable, — more like Jesus, — and appreciate the truth, let it come from what source it may.

The age is advancing in the arts and sciences, and why not in religious truth, — that which is adapted to the wants of the race? It is the heart of man that reaches out after

the truth, to make him free and happy. With the advancement of civilization, and the education of the people in general knowledge, our doctrine must become the popular faith in the world. All that is now wanting is *more* light; not in theology, but upon other topics which inculcate our views *indirectly*.

It has been shown in the Second Part of this work, that, as the dark ages approached and grew more dark, the doctrine became hid; for it is a sentiment that will not appear to exist unless there is light enough to comprehend its adaptedness and utility to promote the happiness of mankind. The more enlightened any age or people become in general knowledge, the more deeply will Universalism become rooted in the popular mind. These are historical facts that cannot be rebutted.

Hence, if it requires intelligence to make our faith permanent and popular, we have reasons to rejoice that it will not cease to exert an influence in the future; for, as the people behold the good, the lovely, and the beautiful in our doctrines, the more deeply will they love Universalism. It will become the cherished sentiment of their hearts. It is growing in popular favor from year to year. Some are advancing towards Universalism on the one hand, and, on the other, Universalism is advancing to take in those minds that are slow in their progress. And, with these facts before us, we see what our work is in all directions. Our light must continue to shine. (c)

It has been remarked of late, by one whose moral and spiritual influence we all feel and acknowledge, that we cannot go back, and that there is no need of it. He says:—

“We have our work to do. It is ours to present the *positive* side of our faith to the world. We need more of

real faith than ever, for it is an age of realities. As steam is of no practical use till it is condensed, so is our faith of no practical benefit to humanity till it is condensed, till it is put into use. Preaching is simply like suffering the steam to flow upward. Living it grandly is like condensing the same vapor into a propelling power. The best argument for our faith is the life of those who cherish it; the best argument for Christianity is a Christian.

"The complaint sometimes made, that Universalism is not growing, is without foundation. Universalism is growing, even if our denomination seems to be standing comparatively still. The whole church is permeated with our faith. There is so much Universalism in evangelical pulpits, that the people are fast changing their ideas and coming virtually over to us, though personally aloof. Orthodoxy keeps its *old* shells yet, but they are filled with the *new* meat! Its canons are of the past, dust and ashes; its spirit is of the new, Christ and him crucified." (24)

"Allow me to say that we have reason to thank God and take courage as we contemplate the *numerical increase of our denomination*, and the fact that *other denominations are embracing the distinguishing feature of our faith*.

"If we look back a century, we see the believers in 'the restitution of all things,' 'like angels' visits, few and far between.' Before Murray came there were but few traces of Universalism in the United States. True, De Benneville, of Germantown, Penn., held to the 'restoration of all souls;' Rev. Richard Clark, of Charleston, S. C., it is said, 'for near fifty years maintained, both by preaching and writing, the doctrine of Universal Restoration;' Dr. Mayhew, of Boston, advocated the same doctrine, and Elders

Adam Streeter and Caleb Rich preached Universalism in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. But, after all, no great impetus was given to our cause till Murray crossed the blue waters of the Atlantic and planted a little church on the shores of the Delaware. Heretofore our doctrine had shed but a faint and feeble light; it had been like the sparks of a fire-fly at evening, which emits only light enough to make the darkness visible around it. But now Murray had come,—Murray lifted up his voice in behalf of the great salvation; and, from the hour he preached his first sermon in Potter's church to the present moment, Universalism has spread to the East and the West, the North and the South." (97)

"The growing liberality of faith under the old creeds is the most hopeful sign of the times, but to the growth of our particular church it is evidently detrimental. It continually 'draws our fire.' Members of other churches, into whose communion they were born, or have naturally drifted, are no longer thrust out for cherishing our heresy, and so they contentedly remain. Nay, in many of these churches our doctrine is no longer heresy; not only are those frankly avowing it received into fellowship, but the church takes pains to state that such belief is no longer in the way of fellowship here, or salvation hereafter!

"We ourselves hardly realize how important has been our work in the development of latent Universalism outside of our church. Where we have not been instrumental in producing it, we have been quick to perceive and only too gratified to proclaim. We have sought it everywhere; not only with the instinct of sympathy, but in the eagerness to multiply weapons for our own defence. We have spoken of the Germans as a nation of Universalists; but it was our

theologians who first called the attention of the world to the fact. The pages of poetry are luminous with our faith; but this was hardly recognized until our own writers began to adduce the 'Testimony of the Poets' to the great salvation." (125)

UNIVERSALISM IN POETRY.

"When we quote passages of poetry as Universalism, we take what the sentiment is, not what the writer intended to express; for poets are like prophets, — they utter grander thoughts than they themselves are able to fathom: —

" ' Truth crushed to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers;
While error, falling, writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshippers.'

"This poetry, without criticism, or protest, is upon almost every preacher's lips. And, too, it is what every unsophisticated heart feels. Yet it is of the very essence of Universalism. Truth is to live, error is to die. Certainly the death of error must be more than a millennium of the universe. But enough: —

" ' This life of mortal breath
Is but the suburb to the life Elysian.'
" ' These all ever have a glorious denouement,'

as Tennyson makes the universe. Sweeping all things with a word, he says: —

" ' One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.'

"So much for poetry, as the language of the heart. And these random quotations may sufficiently indicate that

with which we wish deeply to impress the reader, namely, that, when free from the trammels of a creed, it clearly reveals for our faith a glorious provision in the constitution of the human soul." (20)

"And now, what does all this indicate but a deep sub-soil of hope in the human soul, which is the legitimate and nurturing receptacle of our most excellent and precious faith? It seems to me it can indicate nothing else. It *does* indicate that. So is our faith 'founded upon a rock.'

"And this same, I think, also appears in the creations of the true poet; — not the poet who merely versifies theology, or finds his theme in his own preconceived theological opinions, as do Young, and Milton, and Watts, and Pollock; but the poet, '*nascitur non fit*,' and who sings the creations of his own soul, — who sings not for sect, nor custom, nor pensioned place, and whose own heart is the material and the inspiration of his lays. Such poets sing ever hopefully of some golden age to come. They never sing or chant the anomaly of a dismal region of immortal woe and despair, in the universe of a God of infinite love and justice. Hence Wordsworth's 'Gray-haired Wanderer,' comforting a mourner over a graveyard, says: —

" 'I, speaking now from such disorder free,
Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace, —
I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore
Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake
From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love.
Hope, below this, consists not with belief
In mercy, carried infinite degrees
Beyond the tenderness of human hearts; —
Hope, below this, consists not with belief
In perfect wisdom guiding mightiest power,
That finds no limits but her own pure will.'

"Do you say this is poetry? I know it is — and *therefore* quote it; for 'poetry,' as says an able ethical writer, 'ever sings in accordance with the native feelings.' Stepping upon her wing, the soul is ever borne up, not down; save when she is dragged down, as she often has been by some miserable passion or more miserable theology.

"Thomson is another of nature's poets, with spirit as pure as ever swept a lyre. And thus he sings: —

"Should fate command me to the farthest verge
Of the green earth; to distant barbarous climes;
Rivers unknown to song, where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on the Atlantic isles; 'tis nought to me, —
Since God is ever present, ever felt,
In the void waste as in the city full,
And where he vital breathes there must be joy!
When o'en, at last, the solemn hour shall come
And wing my mystic flight to worlds unknown,
I, cheerful, will obey. There with new powers
Will rising wonders sing. I cannot go
Where universal love smiles not around,
Sustaining all yon orbs, with all their suns,
From seeming evil still edueing good,
And better thence again, and better still,
In infinite progression. But I lose
Myself in him, in light ineffable!
Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise!"

"This is true heart-poetry. In method, and height and depth of expression, it seems perfect as though written beneath the cherubim upon the mercy-seat of nature's holy of holies. I have not language in which to express my admiration of it! It marks the human soul as deeply inlaid with the elements of a better theology than that which was born and nurtured under the long night of the middle ages." ⁽³⁸⁾

"We are jubilant, also, because the literature of our land

and of the world is pervaded by the spirit of Universalism, the spirit of love, which is the spirit of our faith. Tennyson and Whittier are especially the minstrels of that glorious faith, albeit they may ignore the name of Universalists. I heartily thanked the Quaker poet once for his poems, which had blessed my soul; and strengthened me in the great hope that good would finally triumph over evil, and I called them thoroughly Universalist poems. He disclaimed his deserts, and said that he was not prepared to say that all souls would be saved, but thought that God would do the best he could for every soul. This is what Universalists believe, I told him; and because *God* will do the best for the race that is in *his* power, each soul *shall* be brought out of nature's darkness into the marvellous light of truth, and therefore to holiness and joy that shall run parallel with its existence. So, though the sweet poet could not call himself one of us, we will yet be jubilant over the fact that God moves his pen to express the truths we cherish. May his influence extend until the name 'Universalist' becomes synonymous with the term 'mankind.' Do you remember this paragraph in the pleasant little memorial volume which our brother, Rev. John G. Adams, prepared concerning his angel wife? 'How complete the name is!' said Elizabeth Barrett Browning to an American clergyman at her home, as they were conversing upon Christian faith and experience; and her visitor, in answer to her question, 'To what church do you belong?' said, 'I am a Universalist,' and gave her some account of the church and its doctrine. 'Universalist,' said she, meditatively, 'how complete the name is, and how beautiful! How much it expresses, — universal truth, universal faith, hope, charity! It embraces God, and every child of God in the

fulness of love !' The name seemed to her an embodiment of all that was excellent in theology and religion." (11).

UNIVERSALISM IN EUROPEAN LITERATURE.

"The reflecting observer of God's providence, in the affairs of men, will often be gratified in beholding the silent energy with which his truth is advanced by agencies apparently unconnected with theology ; and, also, how that truth will, in its turn, create new agencies of further advancing and enlightening the nations. Hence, look where we may, among the toilers for humanity ; the pioneers of moral reform ; the sturdy warriors against abuses in the church and state ; the thinkers in every field of literature ; the hopeful petitioners and child-like learners at the feet of Jesus, and the footstool of God ; and the ardent aspirants after greater freedom, light, purity, and love, — among each and all these classes of progressive spirits, more numerous now than in any past age of our world, you will find a common sentiment floating, yet most like a bright cloud, but steadily condensing into a substantial principle of faith and action. That sentiment is the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man.

"Of late years, the literature of Europe generally, and especially that of Great Britain, with which we are best acquainted, has more and more strongly reflected the existence of this sentiment in the minds and hearts of the world's thinkers and teachers. Especially, if we take a stand-point for observation a few years back, will this religious progress in literature be rendered more apparent. Not in *negative* indications merely ; for there is much to praise in its *positive* religious inculcations. The sentiment

of Universalism has been gradually pervading many of the best heads and hearts of the literary and scientific circles of Europe. The precise extent cannot be easily ascertained; for as there is no Universalist denomination there, into which its advocates are gathered,—as the sentiment, in fact, is not considered a sectarian one, but may be freely avowed in nearly all sects without censure or reproach,—we cannot easily count numbers, or measure extent.

“The first avowals of Universalism, in light literature, were made by Richardson, author of ‘Pamela’ and ‘Sir Charles Grandison,’ and by Henry Brooke, author of the ‘Fool of Quality,’—both of the school of Fielding and Smollet, but greatly elevated above their compeers in the purity of the moral and religious character of their productions. Daniel De Foe, author of ‘Robinson Crusoe,’—a work whose moral purity and natural piety render it suited to the many generations of future time whose perusal its intense interest secures for its pages,—inserted in that work a strong expression of his disbelief of endless suffering and sin. Mrs. Barbauld (and probably Dr. Aiken), as well as her husband, is also well known to have advocated Universalism; and Miss Edgeworth was strongly suspected of entertaining the same faith. The autobiography of Leigh Hunt abounds in the sentiment of Universalism. ⁽⁸⁾

THREE FORMS OF UNIVERSALISM.

“Universalism is manifested, in our time, under three forms, or taught by three methods: as a philosophical idea in literature; as an emotional sentiment, in all the higher expressions of pulpit eloquence; and as a truth of revelation, in the ecclesiastical body that bears its name.

“As manifested in the first and second form, Universalism is popular.

“The literature in which it is most clearly expressed, or indicated, is the literature which is most eagerly sought, most widely read, and most widely cherished. For the sake of greater precision, we will limit the statement to works of the imagination. No one will question that writings of this class are far more widely read than those of any other. No one will deny that they reflect, and address themselves to, the actual sentiment of society, far more felicitously than works of a graver cast.

“Again, as an emotional sentiment, spontaneously expressing itself in the higher moods of the spiritual mind, Universalism is prevalent and popular. Almost all gifted and aspiring preachers give utterance to it, soon as they rise above the palings of their theology, and surrender themselves to the spirit of truth. Universalism is, thus innocently preached in thousands of Orthodox pulpits,—spiritual Universalism, we mean; the doctrine of infinite and all-conquering love, and its practical corollary, universal charity and justice. The preacher, if he be a superior man, with a mind liberalized by learning and a heart full of generous impulses, breaks over the limits of his creed soon as his soul takes fire, and goes foraging over the unexplored fields of truth; thereby reaping the treasures of heresy without incurring its penalties.

“Orthodox preachers who are addicted to making excursions of this kind are the most popular of their class. Their congregations are partial to fresh meat. There is no spiritual edification to be compared with the satisfaction of listening to a Universalist sermon, pronounced by a minister in the order of Orthodoxy, with no disturbing sus-

picion that it may not have been coined at the evangelical mint. To enjoy the immunities of heresy, and still retain the *prestige* of Orthodoxy, is a favor too precious, we suppose, to be awarded to any but the elect!

"Thus popular is Universalism, considered as a philosophical idea in literature and as an emotional sentiment in preaching.

"But, when we come to the third form in which it is manifested, — as a truth of divine revelation, incorporated in an ecclesiastical body, — we find it unpopular; not welcomed, not admitted to social standing, but opposed, reviled, depressed.

"Why is it that ecclesiastical Universalism still occupies a subordinate position, and is made to struggle for life under the ban of public opinion; even in communities where philosophical and emotional Universalism are popular and prevalent?

"One reason is patent. Theological Universalism, organized into an ecclesiastical power, is aggressive. It is a standing challenge to the old theology; and all who are interested in the preservation of the sacrificial systems are naturally instigated to oppose the new faith." ⁽⁴¹⁾

UNIVERSALISM A REFORMER.

"Universalism has been a philanthropic reformer, — a Howard in the church, — a good Samaritan on the way of life. It has ministered to the bruised and bleeding; befriended the friendless; visited the sick and those in prison; shown mercy to the outcast and criminal; had pity for the slave and the poor victims of lust and appetite. It has dealt tenderly with the erring, and shown itself

the friend of sinners. Yes, in doing this, it has reproved sin always and everywhere, and pressed the solemn truth that God disapproves and punishes all wickedness. It has visited legislatures and governors in its strong appeals for better laws, and done not a little to modify the civil and criminal code of the country. It has stoutly opposed all that is barbarous in theology, in law, in practice, and lent a helping hand to all good reforms. It has been foremost in all humane and generous works.

“Universalism has lent truth and grace to the pen of modern literature. It has given inspiration to many of the sweetest poets of modern times, touched with a tender humanity many scholarly hearts who have put strains of holiest music into verse, and written noble Christian thought into undying books. It has fired not a little of modern oratory. At this time nearly all of the finest orators of this country are in close sympathy with its sentiments. And it has affiliated in like manner with science, and helped largely in that reciprocal work of improvement which science and theology, by mutual co-operation, are so rapidly effecting. In Germany, England, and America, it has so moulded the educated mind as to modify the laws, books, sermons, hymns, songs, popular institutions, and the tastes and culture of the people. It has already instituted a new order of things in the inner life of the world. Its direct and indirect efficiency in producing the great and beneficial changes of the last fifty years, has been more potent than its opposers have dreamed of, or only its warmest friends have dared to claim. It has been, indeed, the dayspring of modern times.” (82)

UNIVERSALISM IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

“In the sermons preached in St. James Chapel, York Street, London, by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M. A., we seem to have almost a continuation of Robertson. Indeed, as his friend and the editor of his works, Brooke was in quick sympathy with Robertson; and in phraseology and illustration, peculiarly his own, he preached in the vein of the famous Brighton rector. Mr. Brooke’s discourses are elaborately prepared. They were thought out carefully, and were put together artistically. It is clear, at the most cursory reading, that the preacher is a master of style. But his is the art that overcomes all affectation of art. He has acquired the most difficult of all arts, — that of *being*, as well as trying to be, *natural*. So much for the master. But what shall we say of the matter? Can men preach Universalism in its form and phraseology, as well as in its spirit and inference, in St. James Chapel? In the sermon, ‘The Festival of All Saints,’ Mr. Brooke unequivocally asserts that, if at last a single soul is lost in woe, or in annihilation even, God’s plan is a failure! If a single soul perishes forever, evil wins the day! The festival of All Saints, he says, celebrates the victory over evil. Then there must be such a victory, or there is no legitimacy in such a festival. ‘Is that work ever to cease?’ the preacher asks. ‘Yes,’ answer some; ‘it will cease when all the redeemed are gathered in, when the number of the elect is complete.’ And where are the rest, we ask, — the millions who have not reached your elect standard? ‘They are in hell forever,’ is the reply, ‘deepening in evil, baffled revenge and hate, consuming and ruinous despair; growing darker and fiercer

against God, the good, from day to day of everlasting punishment.' Is that the cessation of God's work? Is that the result of the magnificent work of Christ? Is that the lame and impotent conclusion of the organization of the great society of the church of Christ? Is that the end of the war against evil? Then I can only say that it seems no triumph at all to me, but ignominious defeat. Then good is not omnipotent, for it is impotent to root out evil. Then love is not lord of all, for it cannot conquer hatred. Then, indeed, we are not Christians who believe in perfect good, but Manichæans, who believe in two rulers, who divide between them a universe in which the evil ruler is with difficulty kept down by the power of the good ruler . . .

"But Mr. Brooke is not satisfied with a repudiation of the doctrine of endless punishment. Between this and that of redemption is the alternative of annihilation. He is quite as explicit in repudiating this. He quotes some as saying that 'the battle against evil will cease when all the redeemed are gathered in, and all the wicked annihilated. God will not punish evil men forever, he will destroy them. Thousands of souls which have not reached the end of their existence shall be utterly blotted out, and God and good be all in all. They point to the analogy of nature, that out of fifty seeds it scarcely brings one to bear.'

"To this Mr. Brooke replies, that 'they forget that for the use of an analogy there must be some resemblance of relations between the things compared; and I should be glad to know what real analogy there is between a seed and a soul. They forget also the torture to a human soul which comes with the thought of the possibility of annihilation. They forget the ineradicable sense of immortality,

of continued individuality, which clings to the heart of the basest and wickedest of the race. There is that within us, — and it is one of those intuitions which, though they prove little, no wise man thinks meaningless, if he believes in a God who has given ideas to the soul, — there is that within us which prefers even the thought of torture to that of cessation of being. They forget that God is dishonored, when he confesses himself incapable of redeeming the souls of men whose Father he has proclaimed himself to be. In assuming fatherhood, he has assumed the duties of a father; and to destroy children because he can do nothing with them, — to give up hope for them, — is an idea I cannot connect with the Almighty Being who revealed himself in Jesus Christ. If one soul perishes forever, it is a failure; evil has won the day.'

"And, all through, the same great truth is elaborated and illustrated. There is not a little Universalism taught in churches nominally Orthodox; but taught as a hint, as a possibility, as a suggestion, as an inference, — taught in principles and premises, not in developed, wrought-out deduction and statement. But if any Ballou, Sawyer, Miner, or Thomas can teach Universalism more explicitly than the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, we wish they would undertake it. As yet they have not done it. We confess to something of pride, certainly to much of satisfaction, on finding that the great faith for which we have humbly toiled so long, and which we long to see advanced in strength and influence, is so directly and forcibly set forth in this volume of sermons from a London churchman, and the friend of Robertson." (136)

"It is well known that Rev. Frederick Dennison Maurice, at present Professor of Moral Philosophy in the

University of Cambridge, England, is a Universalist. We do not mean by this that he takes this name as descriptive of his religious opinions, or that he has any denominational connection with the sect owing allegiance to the great truth of universal salvation ; but he is one of that large class of English thinkers and scholars, of the 'Broad Church' order, who are opposed to the doctrine of endless punishment, and who delight to entertain that larger hope of God's unfailing love that finds no logical sequence save in the doctrines of our faith. Years ago, when Mr. Maurice was chaplain of Lincoln's Inn, and Professor of Ecclesiastical History in King's College, he published a volume of 'Theological Essays,' in which he maintained the position that a theology which does not correspond with the deepest thoughts and feelings of human beings cannot be a true theology, and in which he set forth, in a becoming spirit and with great wealth of statement, his dissent from various points of the old faith. One of the essays of this volume was on eternal life and eternal death, and contained the following paragraph, in which the writer discovers his faith in the great redemption of the future : —

“ ‘ I ask no one to pronounce, for I dare not pronounce myself, what are the possibilities of resistance in a human will to the loving will of God. There are times when they seem to me — thinking of myself more than others — almost infinite. But I know there is something which must be infinite. I am obliged to believe in an abyss of love which is deeper than the abyss of death. I dare not lose faith in that love. I sink into death, eternal death, if I do. I must feel that this love is encompassing the universe. More about it I cannot know ; but God knows. I leave myself and all with him.’ ”

"The views disclosed in these essays, especially in the one from which the foregoing is an extract, gave great offence to certain church dignitaries, and a correspondence ensued between Mr. Maurice and the authorities of King's College, and a movement was instituted to exclude him from his professorship, on the ground that he had departed from the Orthodox faith. But Maurice planted himself fairly on the ground that it was not competent for the authorities to cast him out as a heretic, for declining to dogmatize on a subject which the articles of the Church of England had wisely left unsettled, and called upon them to state what article of a true churchman's faith he had violated by pronouncing the opinions recorded in his book. The church dignitaries were silent, but soon resorted to the last argument in their power, and declared his chair in the college vacant. From this controversy resulted his letter to Dr. Jelf, the principal of King's College, on 'The Word Eternal and the Punishment of the Wicked,' in which was enforced the doctrine of the original essay, and also a signification of the word 'eternal' not inconsistent with learning or Scripture, and yet permitting the larger hope of universal redemption as an ultimate of the divine love." (120)

RESPONSE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSALISM.

"It is a fact interesting to observe, that men of strong intellectual powers, and great moral and literary culture, who were not professionally bound to the support of the popular creed, have generally loathed and repudiated the distinguishing doctrines of the dominant church, and cherished the essential principles of the Universalist faith. With regard to many of them, they were not theologians,

and had not opportunity to give that attention to the study of the Scriptures which should enable them to vindicate the sacred writings from the perversities and abuses of sectarians. But, understanding the *spirit* of Christianity, their clear and educated intellects have seen that this spirit, associated with infinite wisdom and power, must work out an ultimatum of universal good. How exceedingly joyful it would have been to have seen that the letter, as well as the spirit, of Christianity, authorizes this glorious ultimatum; that it is, throughout, the revealed *purpose* of the gospel mission to work this result!" ⁽¹⁵⁾

"We might particularize, had we space, but we have not, and must forbear. We may mention Charles Kingsley, Dickens, Leigh Hunt, the Howitts, Wordsworth, Mrs. Stowe, Longfellow, Bryant, Miss Cummins, Misses Carey, Jean Ingelow, Prof. Holmes, E. P. Whipple, and numerous anonymous writers in our magazines and other periodicals, on both sides of the Atlantic. The influence of these writers is immense, and they are doing much to soften down stern creeds, and make men and women feel and act nobler and kindlier towards others. Indeed, Universalism seems congenial with the very essence of a high and refined literature, while partialism withers the fresh imagination and quenches the fires of genius.

"These and other facts that might be adduced indicate the general prevalence of our faith. They show that the world is beginning to recognize a religious system more congenial with man's holiest desires, and better fitted to supply his spiritual needs." ⁽¹⁶⁾

SCIENCE LEADS TO UNIVERSALISM.

“There is nothing in Universalism which fears, or is opposed to, the criticism of the most scholarly minds. On the contrary it asks that its great doctrine of God’s impartial love be studied in connection with every department of scientific knowledge, and that its assurances of the final triumph of good over evil be sought, not in the holy Scriptures only, but also in that law of progress, everywhere active, everywhere effective, out of which so much order, beauty, purity, and happiness have already been evolved, and which, in God’s hand, cannot fail of its perfect work. It says to the Christian who cherishes its principles, ‘Employ both mind and heart in thy great work. Call to thine aid philosophy, ethics, history, and logic, and let them all find a helper, a co-witness, an illustration and sanction, in the Gospel of Christ. Yoke theology and science together, for God intended them as co-workers, Study nature, holding the Bible in one hand; and when you would contemplate the providential dealings of God with man, let the past, through history, act as interpreter for the present and the future.’

“I confess that I do not know what scholarly and devout brothers mean when they talk of getting out into a broader liberty than is tolerated by Universalism, where they can have a more free religion. I am prepared to assert and to maintain in this, or any place, that Universalism not only tolerates the greatest freedom of thought in matters of religion, but that it has led the way towards such freedom, acting as the pioneer of thought in all directions, in opposition to the influences of other religions.

Go back in thought to the years when our doctrine was not known by its present name, and when only a little of its spirit was manifest in the churches. Was there freedom for the mind in those times? Ask Galileo, who, suffered imprisonment for the publication of a single scientific fact. Ask the great Kepler, who was denounced for thinking beyond the dogmas of a creed, and who, with truths fresh from God's first testament, was afraid to utter them. Ask the gifted and skilful Angelo, whose genius was fettered, cramped, and perverted by the church that patronized him, yet made him slave to its ideas; and questioning thousands more, who, seeking to project new ideas into the mental darkness of those times, were thrust back, held, and silenced by an illiberal and bigoted priesthood; end your inquiries by asking him, who, seeking to reform the church, found himself outside the pale of its fellowship and beneath its most terrible anathemas.

"In those centuries there was no such thing as freedom of thought. All the progress then made was in opposition to the spirit of the popular religions of those times. It is true that Columbus followed his liberated thought across the ocean, and added another continent to the map of the world; but, in doing this, he encountered scoffing and derision from all the ecclesiastics of his own Genoa. Copernicus sent forth his thought into the deeps of space, and found the path in which the earth revolves; but, in doing it, he was treated with cold disdain by the very church at whose altar he ministered.

"When Relly was preaching the doctrine of God's impartial grace, on the other continent, the '*Novum Organum*' of Lord Bacon was caught up by a new interest, and, under the approving smile of a theology which commended the

exercise of thought and reason in matters of religion, it soon ripened into a grand harvest of science.

"When Murray and Winchester were preaching in this country, and saying to the people, 'God gave you the wondrous powers of intellect which you possess, with intent that you should use them in seeking for truths, in all directions,' Franklin was taming the lightnings, and ranging through great realms of philosophy, with unexampled success.

"As our doctrine prevailed, and like leaven was manifest in the popular theology of those days; as the views of Rely, Murray, Ballou, and others of our now sainted fathers, spread far and wide, finding minds to approve and hearts to welcome them wherever they are proclaimed, — Cuvier was making his collection of comparative anatomy; Buckland and Lyell were unfolding the mysteries of geology; Herschell was sweeping the heavens with his grand telescope, and Humboldt was weighing the stars as in balances, detecting and tracing the electric currents in the earth, and causing the nations to lift their hands in amazement at the truths he evolved from every department of nature.

"I do not say that these men of science were Universalists. I do not say that Universalism, so called and so known by the men just named, wrought this great change, and led the way to the progress now realized; but I do say — what can be clearly shown — that it was a mighty and efficient agency in setting thought free from the theological shackles it had worn for centuries; and that all the freedom now enjoyed in Christian lands, whether scientific, political, or religious, finds an advocate and a sanction in our most precious faith." (30)

THE TENDENCIES OF THE AGE.

“Another of these indications we discover in the literature of the age. The complete circle of literary production is the complete representation of the spirit of any period. Herein are reflected the manners and opinions of society. In the minds of men of genius, the great ideas of time culminate. Homer, Ariosto, and Goethe may be regarded as the best exponents of the age in which they lived.

“Thus, by examination of the highest literature of any period, we arrive at a knowledge of the leading ideas of the time. Most accurately, perhaps, are these displayed in the poets and philosophers, as they are not confined by the forms that often crush the genius and impede the genuine utterance of the historian and the man of science. The great poems of an age represent its highest ideal; the blind aspiration of the mass purified and exalted in the soul of the poet. Its philosophical systems are the attempts of lofty minds to solve questions which have arisen in the progress of mankind. Thus are expressed the mental hopes and difficulties of the period.

“We have said the sentiment of love, which is the basis of Universalism, is deepening in our times. If this be so, we shall discover it in the literature of the age. Poetry will breathe a spirit of humanity unknown before, and philosophy will reason more than ever upon the worth and destiny of man, and the supremacy of love in the government of the moral universe. Such is the fact, as it must appear to every impartial and critical observer.

“We have only to mention the names of the great poets

of our age to verify this assertion. Scott, whose overflowing humanity envelops like an atmosphere the scenes he portrays, whose humor and love lead us through the rugged period of an early civilization, instinctively concealing its hard features, and revealing only its pleasant associations; Southey, who loves in Eastern tale and gorgeous allegory to sing the triumph of love and the overthrow of evil; Wordsworth, the poet of common life, tearing the hard forms of materialism from all things around us, and revealing in them an ideal beauty and a spiritual meaning, the poet of humanity, who sings of the sufferings, the hopes, and the joys of humble men; Shelley, driven by the tyranny and the lying theology of his country to renounce his God and Saviour, yet reposing upon the great idea of love, with a faith which may shame many a man who would cast a stone at his grave; even poor Byron, whose dreadful misanthropy only revealed the depth of the love that was so turned awry, and who seems to have been created to stand for all time a monument of the desolation that comes upon the soul that hates; Bailey, whose religious fervor and lofty imagination redeem his rough and inharmonious style; Barrett, from the gloom of her sick-room, chanting in quaint style of the high themes, God, and love, and life; Tennyson, and Horne, and our own Longfellow, reproducing the forms of Grecian art, and pouring into them a soul of Christian purity and humanity, — these, with a host of celebrated names in other languages, have borne testimony to this divine principle.” (25)

THE LIBERALISM OF THE AGE.

“It is claimed by Universalists, theirs is a liberal faith.

A leading feature of this faith is, that God's goodness is not limited to time or space. All human beings are his offspring, and to all of them he will secure final beatitude, which will forever cause his praise to resound through the arches of heaven. Those religions antagonistic to this view ordinarily are designated by the name of Partialism. In the foregoing sense Universalism is liberal in its doctrinal inculcations, because of all the theologies it promises mankind more than any of them.

"But liberalism assumes other forms and names. Moreover, the general tendency of religious thought is liberal; and other bodies and associations of men are wont to appropriate this title to different co-operative movements. If the word liberal is sometimes misused, there is a right sense in which it may be freely employed. There are many practical movements set on foot, of philanthropic character, not identified with denominational Universalism, but which accord strictly with the humane spirit of its theoretical teachings. Logically the denomination must be at one with these movements. Practical Universalism is what the world in one way and another craves as an antidote to its ills. In a practical sense, further than it is thus applied, it is on a par with other isms. As a theological system Universalism is not accepted by the bulk of the American people, but the spirit of the doctrine underlies all the great movements that in any way tend to bless the down-trodden and oppressed. It is this which fires the hearts of philanthropists and stirs to the quick all genuine reformers. Regardless of the name, there is more latent Universalism in the present age than there has been in any preceding age; and its triumphs are many; and it behoves the denomination not to allow the world to steal the march of it. . . .

“Universalism, as the embodiment of a religious movement, has its antecedents. In perpetuating itself it must not be oblivious to these. It must continue to be liberal, or liberalism under some other form will supplant it. I do not employ the term liberalism in a sceptical and irreligious sense, I use it as a synonym for that love and charity which are quick to recognize the right and the true in all their diversified relations. The popularity of Beecher is the effect of a combination of those qualities in himself, which impart greater efficiency to any preacher of Universalism who possesses them. The straiter sects are not going very soon to receive the Universalist body into fellowship. But the people will rally around the man of a large Universalist heart, whether he chooses to be known by one or another name. A man may believe that all will be made at last holy and happy, and argue his belief convincingly. If entirely wrapped up in his own sect, if his heart is cold and his nature is unsympathetic, he cannot have access to the world of living men and women. The demands of Protestantism require more men like Chapin, Beecher, Bushnell, Martineau, and James Freeman Clark. The more such men we have the sooner the world will be imbued with the spirit of genuine Universalism, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ.” ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

“How does it happen, that the best talent and culture of the age is found in the ranks of liberalism in religion? — a fact well known, and to the truth of which the evangelicals themselves testify, as we have just named. How does this happen? Is it one of the strange, inexplicable accidents that sometimes occur? Or are there natural and philosophical reasons for this fact? We give an affirmative

answer to this last question. And, in elucidating our answer, we maintain that the want which this class of lecturers supplies, is the yearning desire of the best minds, of the men and women for broader and better views of truth and justice in their various relations and applications, than find either a natural birthplace or a congenial home in the narrow sectarianism of the day. From habit, from the love of popularity, from fear of men, hundreds will go to Orthodox churches on Sunday, who gladly avail themselves of every opportunity on week-day to hear the fresh, vital words of such heretics as Phillips and Chapin. They endure the one and enjoy the other. Let one of their own men—though eminent in his own circle—prepare to stand on the platform, and they care but little about him. The Tyngs and Beechers are popular to-day because they take their inspirations more from broad liberalism than narrow ‘evangelism.’

“But look again. Most of the great thinkers, writers, orators, poets, and authors of the present age and all countries are men and women largely imbued with liberal religious feelings. It seems to be the nature of narrowness in religion to fetter the intellect and dwarf the manliness of our natures. The crude dogmas of the past, when believed, impel men to live in the past. And under their influence and authority men may be in one sense scholars; they may thumb in all reverence the dusty tomes of well-nigh forgotten or useless lore, but they live in the past; seek the living among the dead, and for aught they would be able to do, or dare to do if able, the world would run riot in ignorance and wrong, the power of priestcraft would remain unweakened, the grossest superstition would spread over the world, the chains of slavery, in all its forms, would

remain unbroken, and old error, in all its ancient darkness, would still brood in dismal clouds over all lands and climes. There is something in the very atmosphere of religious error that poisons the life-blood of freedom and progress. It is in its nature as much the foe of science as of mental liberty and the rights of conscience.

"The exclusive creeds of the day are unfavorable to boldest and freest thought. Partialism makes dwarfs. Liberalism makes giants. Partialism makes slaves. Liberalism makes freemen. A Humboldt, a Sumner, a Bright, a Mill, a Chapin, or Phillips, could no more grow out of the soil of Orthodoxy, than the fruits of the tropics could grow on the frozen coasts of Lapland. Liberalism inspires the fierce and uncompromising warfare of Phillips against hydra-headed wrong. Liberalism vindicates human rights in the eloquent, majestic sentences of a Sumner. Liberalism talks sweetly of truth in the womanly tones of a Dickinson. And Liberalism flashes, in the vehement and brilliant utterances of a Chapin, in behalf of all that is right, and in condemnation of all that is wrong." (45)

TRUE PRAYER IS UNIVERSALISM.

"One of the most consoling and cheerful facts which can be considered in connection with Universalism is this: our faith is in harmony with the best aspirations and hopes of the soul, and hence all true prayers are instinct with the spirit of our religion, and, unconsciously to those who offer them, are often in complete harmony with Universalism. In the degree that prayer is true prayer, we say, it is the soul's petition for the success of our religion. This statement may startle our 'evangelical' friends somewhat,

but the statement is susceptible of proof. There are some prayers which are outside of our faith, and not pervaded by its spirit, such as that of the man when he sought in prayer the strength to burn his brother; but they are not Christian prayers, and the spirit of our Saviour is not discovered in them. Every prayer that has the spirit of love indwelling and consecrating its utterance, that is prompted by the Holy Spirit and that looks to God and heaven, is naturally a prayer for Universalism. Only those prayers which are conceived in weakness and ignorance, and which are of the earth and earthy in their nature, are against the spirit of the faith we cherish. It is the privilege of Universalists to sustain and cherish that system of religion which is the answer of all prayer, and in whose radiant conquest the world at last will rejoice.

“Universalism teaches the doctrine for which all sects pray, and while we labor and suffer reproach, millions of earth’s weary hearts are uplifted to God, beseeching him to bless the world as we hold the world must eventually be blessed. It is most interesting to trace the harmony that is discovered between man’s holiest prayers and that consummation of the divine love which Universalism teaches. Let us take a few examples from the supplications of men as an example, and we will see how naturally all things merge into the great want of the race. Is our prayer for individuals and nations? Hear the word of the Lord which assures us that all the kindreds, and nations, and families of the earth shall be blessed in Jesus Christ. Is our prayer for parents and children? Remember the express words of Scripture which declare that the promise is unto both, — ‘unto you and your children.’ Is it for the cessation of war, and the incoming of the day of peace?

Behold, the 'nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and men shall learn war no more.' Is it for the conquest over death and the salvation of all souls? Behold, the 'last enemy, death, shall be destroyed,' for 'as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.'

"And for this all mankind allow their orisons to ascend. Universalism is the only faith which can be prayed for; the only theory of the end of all things that would not cause the heavenly Father to grieve and sadden were it put into form and offered to him as prayer." (120)

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT UNIVERSALISM.

It is but proper, in this closing section, to present a few things in relation to what others have said about our doctrine, and especially about our centenary meeting, held in Gloucester, Mass., Sept., 1870:—

The Boston "Traveller" says: "The celebration of the American Centenary of Universalism, at Gloucester, last week, is one of the most agreeable incidents of the time. A comparison between 1770 and 1870 must be highly gratifying to John Murray's followers. Then a Universalist was considered by most Christians as being no better than an atheist in respect to his religion, no matter how estimable he may have been in respect to morality; but now the whole Christian world recognizes the religious worth of Universalism. No denomination exists in more deserved respect."

"There is hardly any chapter in the religious history of the world that savors of romance more than that which relates to the origin and growth of the Universalist denomi-

nation in the United States. The Pilgrims came to New England to enjoy religious freedom ; but they were a company of men who thought alike and were prepared to act together. Even the apostles were eleven in number after the death of their Master, and there were numerous pious women to advise, comfort, and strengthen them. But John Murray fled from persecution in a spirit somewhat alike that of Elijah, when he escaped from Ahab to the mountain with the mournful cry that he alone of all the servants of the Lord was faithful. And as Elijah found that even in his depression and desire for death his God had still a work for him, so Murray discovered that it was not without a purpose that he was driven from his native land ; but that there was left to him the work of founding on these shores a new denomination destined to grow to proportions which no man may limit.

“ If Universalism be true, it has been said, there is no need of any religion at all, and, as the doctrine spreads, the outward practice of religious duties at least will decrease. But, on the other hand, the facts remain that, as the denomination gains power and numbers, it is among the most active in building churches, establishing schools, founding papers to inculcate its specific doctrines, and, in fact, in all the works of a progressive Christian church. The Gloucester meeting marks an era in its history. The one hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the denomination in this country has been signalized by the raising of a very large sum of money by the voluntary contributions of its members ; its position as one of the important systems of belief is recognized ; its day of small things is past. If its opportunities are wisely used, it has a future before it of

growth and prosperity many fold more brilliant than has been its increase during the centenary just closed." (114)

"We are just coming into a generation of centennial celebrations. The last third of the eighteenth century in this country was marked by so many great events and so many birthdays of sects, communities, and revolutions, that the corresponding period of this century cannot but be a succession of centenary jubilees. Prominent among these will be the religious, in which the Methodists led off in 1866, and are followed by the Universalists in 1870. The centennial Thanksgiving of the latter denomination has culminated with the United States Convention at Gloucester, that being the site of the first church edifice ever built by a Universalist society in this country.

"The origin of Universalism in America did not lack that almost miraculous coincidence of circumstances which somehow characterizes all great beginnings, and makes them smack of 'special providence.' John Murray was an Englishman, whom the preaching of John Wesley and Whitefield had induced to become a Methodist preacher. Being converted to Universalism, he suffered so much from the persecution of his old associates and from private misfortune, that he resolved to start life anew in America. At that time there lived in the village of Good Luck, on the coast of New Jersey, Thomas Potter, a planter of little learning, but of a vigorous and speculative mind. He had wrought out for himself a religious faith that he longed to hear preached to the world, and, to accomplish his desire, built a church at Good Luck. To this church he invited preachers from far and near, but he never found one who held forth his doctrine, and the plain, barn-like edifice, which, we believe, is still standing, came to be

termed in derision by the villagers 'Potter's meeting-house.' One Saturday morning in September, 1770, an English vessel was discovered becalmed in the offing, and Potter was seized with so profound a conviction that it bore him his apostle, that when Rev. John Murray, with other passengers, strolled upon the shore, the eccentric planter, without the ceremony of an introduction, met him with 'Thou art the man,' and a pressing invitation to his house and pulpit. The greeting was a little startling, and not altogether welcome to a man who was flattering himself that he had left his past life altogether behind. But Potter was urgent, and Murray agreed to stay and preach if the wind did not change so that he could go on to New York. The wind did not change; he preached; Potter embraced him after the discourse, and in that hour began the career of the Universalist denomination in America.

"The denomination, as now constituted, is well planted as a church, while its influence has been exerted to a still greater extent in ameliorating the severity of contemporary theologies. It now has two million dollars invested in educational institutions, three of which are of collegiate rank, — Tufts College being the most promising. The academic schools take a high rank. In its educational field is the most pressing need of work, and to this purpose the denomination must bend its best energies to keep pace with the other sects of the time. The special work commemorative of the present occasion has been the raising of two hundred thousand dollars for general purposes, a fund which each succeeding year will probably see largely augmented." (138)

"Well — the week of especial observance, within this year of jubilee, has come, has passed by, and has taken its

place in history ; and it seems, in view of the scenes' therein witnessed, not sufficient merely to say that it was a success. The Universalist Centenary celebration would, of course, have been all of that, wherever and under whatever circumstances it might have been held ; but the recent manifestation may be considered even more than that : it was indeed a *triumph* ; a grand gathering of the immense army whose mission it is to disseminate and spread abroad the doctrine of 'peace on earth and good will to men.' The spontaneous manifestation of kindly Christian feeling from those of other denominations was most gratefully and cordially received and highly appreciated, as going to show that difference of opinion on points of theology, honestly entertained, were no bar or hindrance to the coming together as brethren, of all believers, on the common ground of Christian faith and trusting hope. Having enjoyed the inestimable privilege of being present at this happy reunion, we will just make note of some of the thoughts and reflections suggested by the event, which will ever hereafter form a bright page in the history of the church universal.

"It would seem that all things were combined together to produce the most perfect enjoyment of all. The elements were most propitious, even much more so than could be reasonably expected just at that season of the autumnal equinox ; the rays of the September sun just tempered to the right degree by a gentle breeze from the ocean ; the nights most luxuriously comfortable ; and, to crown the joy of the feast, there was the vast multitude predisposed to be happy ; and, of course, with all their surroundings, they could not be otherwise. 'The peace and dignity of the State' was, as a wise precaution, duly and properly represented ; but I think the official position was a mere sine-

cure. So far as I have been able to learn, there was no occasion in which their services were required, and during the whole time no accident or casualty occurred to mar the pleasure of the occasion.

“It was a most interesting scene to look upon: the earnest, intelligent faces of that immense auditory, every individual intent on catching every word that fell from the various speakers; and to see and hear the ‘audible smile’ that would ripple over the surface at some happy hit, some harmonious allusion or illustrative anecdote, or the gesture of approbation that would follow the enunciation of some great principle of faith and doctrine. And the music of those noble hymns seemed to rise spontaneously, as it were, like the song of birds.” (122)

PART XI.

THE FRUITS OF UNIVERSALISM.

UNIVERSALISM GOOD IN ITS EFFECTS.

IN this Part of our labors, the reader will discover what has been written in relation to the fruits of our faith; its influence and tendency; its moral power in the formation of character, and the education of our people in all just and righteous duties. The highest value we can place upon any system of religion is that which flows from its **PRAC-TICAL** workings; from its moral bearings to save and bless mankind. And this is wherein lies the chief beauty and glory of our precious doctrine, so full of hope and encouragement, that all will finally bear fruit to the honor and glory of God. (c)

“The morality of Universalism is of a pure and elevated character. There is no fact of which we are more firmly persuaded than this. All that is necessary to make every Universalist a good man, in the true and proper acceptance of these words, is to make him in practice what he is in profession. There is nothing visionary or fanciful here. The *practical* Universalist *must* be a good man. All those who carry out the principles of the doctrine we profess, in their practice will be what the Gospel requires men to be, — lovers of God, and lovers of mankind. We are well aware that this doctrine has been charged with exerting an im-

moral tendency. We have been told times without number that it encourages sin. Now we meet this objection with facts. Of two professed Universalists, one of them striving to illustrate the principles of his faith in his walk and conversation, the other being a Universalist merely by profession, but giving no particular heed to the system as a rule of practice, — *which will be the better man?* Which will be more likely to love God as a Father, and to regard and serve men as brethren? There can be but one answer to this question.

“What a moral power would the order of Christians to which we belong exert, if every professed believer of Universalism was a practical Universalist! An unbelieving world would again be constrained to say: ‘Behold how these Christians love one another; behold how earnestly they labor in every good word and work. They are ‘co-workers with God.’ No conviction ever rested in our heart of a more undoubted and enduring character than this, — that the religion of Jesus, in its purity, is the greatest blessing that heaven has vouchsafed to mortals. It is a lamp to guide our feet in the path of duty, and the sweetest solace in every season of trouble. Let us love Christianity in its purity, and we shall be blessed of God.”⁽³⁾

“There is also positive good in believing Universalism. For all that is amiable in character, reforming in influence, pleasing in contemplation, happifying in practice, and beneficial in consequences, in each and all the other systems of religion, are here retained in all their loveliness, in all their power, and in all their benefit. Nor are they merely freed from the pernicious and debasing alloys of error and of practice with which they are there united and mixed up; but they are also extended to infinity, made

durable as eternity, and are fixed as certainly as the throne and government of our God. I challenge the mention of a single particular of the above-named character with which this is not the case. Not one can be named, for not one exception exists. Would you receive into your mind and affections the glorious perceptions arising from a hope in immortality and endless life, from the full perfections, glory, and loveliness of God and his providences, as yielded by the teachings of nature and revelation combined, and addressed to the reason and religious feelings of men? You will find them by embracing the doctrine of Universalism." (8)

"Universalism is a doctrine that can be practised, — for its spirit is love, — to each and all, through all times, and in all natures of existence. It is a faith that can be prayed for, and that is prayed for in the hour of most rapturous devotion by all Christians when the love of God is most shed abroad in the heart. It is a faith that encourages undying effort for the recovery of the prodigal, affirming that none are all evil, and that all are capable of being redeemed. It is a faith that alone affords the consolation which the bereaved require, and it has the only voice that can speak with certainty of the 'better world' to the dying." (20)

THE FRUITS OF UNIVERSALISM.

"It is hardly to be expected that a system of faith which has risen from obscurity, been unceasingly opposed, persecuted, and reviled, can occupy a prominent place in community without exhibiting some interesting and obvious fruits. Its bitterest foes cannot deny its numerical strength any more than they can set aside the causes of their own

state, nor will they attempt to refute the fact of its rapid increase, and almost unparalleled progress in this and other countries. It may be well to notice some of its *effects* as it has silently and surely moved on in its meliorating, and subduing, and renovating power.

“1. Universalism has placed moral excellence in its true light, and presented the just and true motives to its attainment. The idea that men must fear and tremble at the visible chain, the fagot, or the halter, or the still more horrible woes of the unseen future, might do for the ages of barbarism and heathenism; but something better must be instituted for a refined and enlightened age. This motive must lie in the love of goodness, for its own intrinsic and eternal excellence, not in the dread of impending destruction. It was a trite saying of the acute and judicious Bogue, that ‘The method which Christianity proposes of reforming the world, and meliorating the condition of man, is not by brute force, but by implanting in the soul the sentiments of knowledge and of goodness; the fruit will be certain felicity. She does all her work, and effects all her purposes by means of *principles*; she employs and permits no other way besides.’

“Has this not been the course of Universalism since we began to flourish as a sect? Instead of resorting to the visible, outward power, it has insisted on knowing and appreciating goodness, having right and just ‘*principles*’ of thought, and sentiment, and action.

“2. We see the fruits of ‘Universalism in the modification of the religious opinions of men. The time is approaching, yea, it now is, when ‘the policy or the party,’ who shall cling to all the notions of a venerable theology,

must lie under the condemnatory sentence of a just and enlightened public opinion.

“Again, the fruits of Universalism have been seen in the support it has afforded under the temporal afflictions of life. In this mixed state of good and evil, alternate cloud and sunshine, who has not felt the bitterness of grief, of misfortune and bereavement? If such men as Job and Jeremiah, under the ordinary ills of life, cursed the day in which they were born, it is not to be supposed that we can escape calamities and evils which render life itself almost a burden. The views which Universalism presents of God and his government have sustained the mourner, consoled the broken-hearted, and bound up the bruised spirit. On this we might enlarge; but suffice it to say, for the present, that it is peculiar to our system of faith to believe that all the doings of God are *parental*, and as such, however dark and mysterious to our short-sighted vision, they must be for good.” ⁽⁴³⁾

THE MISSION OF UNIVERSALISM.

“The mission of Universalism, — this is a great, a glorious theme! We have already seen its magic power triumphing over much that is inconsistent with its spirit. But when with the eye of faith we look forward to its more extensive victories, our minds become lost in the grandeur of the prospect. But much remains to be done before we shall be permitted to witness the full measure of its power. How desolating the inroads of sin, sorrow, and death, in our midst! Yet, shall these be swept away, Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possessions.

"1. *All error shall disappear.* Universalism is built upon the broad foundation of God's illimitable and undying love. It is interwoven into the very elements of his being and flows necessarily from his character. It is a system, too, in harmony with all the holiest desires of every human heart. It commends itself to the enlightened reason of every reflecting mind. Such a scheme, then, emanating from the God of all truth, in harmony with the holiest feelings of every human soul, must finally prevail. God, angels, and men are co-workers in its advancement. Who can successfully oppose its progress against such a combined power?

"2. *All sin shall be taken away.* Reform in everything that tends to ennoble the mind, or sanctify the heart, is the watchword of the day. . . . Love is the strongest principle in the universe, and will prevail. Nothing can resist its power. Christ shall conquer, — 'his blood cleanseth from all sin.' He shall 'finish transgression, make an end of sin, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness.'

"3. *All suffering shall die away.* Much of the sorrow which falls to the lot of humanity arises from sin, and, consequently, must disappear with it. . . . The light of love shall arise and shine upon the benighted world. From the lowest depths of the tomb shall come up the voice of gladness, bidding us despair not, for we shall live again. 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' The scheme of universal grace looks forward to the time when all tears shall be wiped from off all faces; when death shall be conquered; when 'the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads;' when they 'shall obtain

joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.' " (31)

"The Universalist church has its *providential mission*. It came because it was wanted. It is no interloper. And it came forth to reap and to sow, and then to reap again. Many times has it been called upon to lift up its eyes and look on the fields already white to harvest, and to go forth and gather up the ripe fruits of its labor into bundles. And now, after the preparation of the dark and weary days when the furrows for planting were watered by its tears and enriched by its cheerful sacrifices, — after the preparation of many seasons of sowing and reaping in constantly enlarging fields, — its great harvest-time has come, when it must wield the sickle with a stronger hand than ever before, and tie with firmer bands the great yellow sheaves, or the fruits of all its past labors will go back into the ground, and be lost to it forever. The men and women who to-day compose the membership of the Universalist church have entered upon the labors of others. They have not to pioneer the way into the wilderness, and cleave away the forest, and break up the soil, and till, and plant, amid hardship and privation. This work, in great part, has been done, — we may say that it has all been done. Behold, now, the harvest! — richer and grander than any harvest that ever invited the reaper's hand beneath the sun." (144)

ITS INFLUENCE AND TENDENCY.

Under this section we introduce very important elements of our system of faith. And the moral duties which the God of all grace requires of us are proofs of Universalism, — *love and good works*. These things are profitable

unto men. We begin our selections with the language of one who was a bright and shining light in our denomination, and who lived to a good old age, to witness the increase and influence of Universalism as a religious sentiment. He says: "Its influence on human character and professors is good. It is essential in the first place. If you would give the man full moral power, he must drink in the sentiment. Partialism dwarfs the man; it bends the form; the eye loses its vigor, and man wastes away. Universalism exalts the man. It matters not with me whether I fade away; I prize the sentiment of our faith. When you drink into the mind these thoughts of our religion, it finishes the man,—it has a social influence,—it is far better to love all beings than a few. Universalism extinguishes hatred, and induces love. I believe, could our sentiments be spread abroad, and felt in every heart, there would be a thrill of happiness moving our race which humanity has never felt. If these things be so, are not our sentiments worthy of acceptance?" (17)

"We are perfectly willing that our religious faith should be tested by its fruit. But we object to the disposition manifested to decide the influence of our whole system of doctrine by the character and influence of persons who were never members of our churches, or, being members, never obeyed our requirements. We say that such persons are not the exponents of our faith; they never manifested its influence, and, consequently, our faith is neither responsible for them, nor to be judged by them.

"In our opinion, clergymen should be careful to conduct themselves honorably and charitably towards those who differ from them in opinions. Diversity of sentiment is inevitable in a state of things like the present. The dis-

pensation of time is an obscure dispensation at best, and, till the light of eternity shall break upon the mind, it is not to be expected that erring mortals will see eye to eye. While groping in this world, and following the guidance of that erring reason which is scarcely sufficient to direct us through it, it must be folly to suppose ourselves always in the right, and more than folly to reprobate those whom we consider in the wrong.

“ And it is a much greater folly still, to condemn whole denominations of professing Christians, because isolated members here and there, or even ministers, have proved themselves unworthy of the Christian profession. It is very true that the loose and immoral lives of some of those claiming to be Universalists was only one of the reasons urged why our faith, as a system of morals, is a failure; but, after all, it was one of the reasons. We admit that we are so unfortunate as to have some unworthy members; and, pray, what church has not? But, against the names of these unworthy members, we place the names of hundreds of earnest, devoted men and women, whose lives are above reproach; and we ask whether the success of our faith is to be measured by the character of the few or the many.

“ And, what is more, the Universalist denomination has suffered from the manifestation of this spirit, on the part of their opposers, for many years. But all of our opposers are not actuated by this spirit. The Rev. Edward Harris, an Orthodox minister, of New England, testified some years ago that ‘ the Universalists, though not sound in faith, are nevertheless the most correct in practice of any people I ever knew.’ And the Rev. T. F. Norris, a Methodist minister, and the editor of the Boston ‘ Olive Branch,’ said,

in an issue of his paper, for July, 1843, 'That the Universalists, in point of moral character, stand as high as any of their more Orthodox neighbors.' Those ministers evidently did not regard Universalism as a failure in morals." (117)

"The most serious charges against Universalism are, that it is incapable of reforming men; that it encourages us to live in sin, assured that we shall at last be saved; that, in fine, it annihilates all idea of moral ability. Now, if this be true, we are embracing a monstrous error. There can be no better proof of the falsity of an opinion than its demoralizing tendency. Let us examine this doctrine, and endeavor to point out its legitimate results.

"By Universalism, I understand the recognition of love as the highest principle in the moral universe. The final salvation of mankind is an inference from this. I believe that God is love; that it is his purpose to educate and reform all the children of men. Not that he is to force men into salvation against their wills, — that would be fatalism, — but that he is to accomplish his great purpose by the exertion of means and influences addressed to the moral nature of his creatures. We believe every human being capable of reformation and improvement; and God certainly knows how to wake the slumbering elements of goodness by the various events of his providence, for he is infinite in resources. It is a false idea that Universalism denies man's responsibility or agency in the work of salvation. It regards man as simple and degraded, but still the wreck of a noble nature, with a religious sentiment in his soul, which instinctively clings to duty, with a conscience that is never silenced. It shows a God exerting the influence of his power and goodness to quicken this sentiment of duty,

leading his child through all the vicissitudes of time and eternity, solely to excite him to the love of holiness." (28)

A GOOD RESULT FROM UNIVERSALISM.

One of the chief fruits of our system of faith is its saving power over the sceptical mind. There have been many confessions, that it has saved the *now* happy believer from the worst forms of *infidelity*. It is the *true* antidote of scepticism, and will yet turn many unbelievers to the knowledge of the truth, and to rest their hope in Jesus, "the chief corner-stone" of the Christian fabric.

No one can read our many able books in defence of Christianity, and accuse us of leaning towards those forms of rationalism that are now aiming their blows at the very foundation of the Christian religion. It is our interpretation of Christianity that will stand the *test*; that will draw men to Christ; that will lead them to follow him as the Way, and the Life of the world. He is the *true* Light, and when this is gone from us we are in darkness, and dark indeed will be the day when we put out the light that is now in the world! Let the following be read with interest, for it is to the point. (c)

"The alternative is not, as many would have us believe, between the old system and the new, for the old system is hopelessly doomed. The alternative is not between Christianity, as it has been interpreted for the last thousand years, and the new interpretation; but it is between the new interpretation and no Christianity at all. The question is not, whether the world will reverence Jesus as Deity or the ideal man and Messiah, but whether they shall accept him as the ideal man and Messiah, or have no Christ at all.

The heart of the world has grown so large and so warm, — it has absorbed so much of the true Christian spirit, — that the old dogmatic theology has become utterly incongruous to its wants and repulsive to its tastes. These doctrines, which so outrage the highest sense of justice ; which make Christian consolation synonymous with crystallized selfishness and consummated meanness ; which array the character of God in antagonism with the highest standard of human honor, — are sapping faith in objective and historic Christianity. The time has come when Christianity must slough off the dogmas of the trinity, vicarious atonement, and endless suffering, or the world will slough it off. In short, the time has come when the world must accept that system which we call Universalism as the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or the swelling tides of infidelity will sweep the last vestige of nominal Christianity from the face of the earth. We labor not, then, merely to lift burdens from human hearts, and clouds from the pathway of human life, and to realize the ideal of a higher religious growth. True, we do all this ; and the prospect of success is an inspiration. But we also labor to save the church, to save Christianity, to save our modern civilization, to save the walls of progress, which have been growing through eighteen Christian centuries, from tumbling. For we feel that the time has come when the alternative is between Universalism and Infidelity. We feel that Universalism is the capstone which can bind these splendid walls, and surmount and crown them with glory.

“As there are other elements in human progress, other elements in civilization, besides Christianity, so civilization can progress up to a certain point without it. Buckle shows conclusively that the very first stratum of civilization

is accumulated wealth. Then come intellectual culture and governmental institutions, polished manners and the fine arts. From these materials, walls of very great strength and marvellous splendor can be built. But you cannot carry them to a certain height without the capstone of the Christian religion. These forces, so tenacious and so mighty in the beginning, if carried beyond a certain point of development without the binding power of Christ, become elements of disintegration. Evidently the old civilization, which was carried to the very acme of splendor, perished precisely because Christianity was not in it. It certainly had every other element of permanency." (80)

THE EXPERIENCE OF UNIVERSALISM.

"I would simply remark, that the idea which is entertained by some, that Universalism leads those who embrace it to give up all anxiety about saving sinners from their sins, is a great mistake. I once entertained this opinion myself; but I find it quite different. I never had a more earnest desire to save sinners since I became a professor of religion than I now feel. The feeling, it is true, arises from a different source. None of it, I confess, arises from fear and terror, but purely and solely from benevolence. I see that God loves the sinner, and I cannot but love him too. I see that God has thrown around him means for his reformation, and has committed unto Christians the ministry of reconciliation; and, for one, I feel urged, by the spirit of love, of heaven, and of reconciliation, to influence and draw the sinner from his unhallowed course. I would now point him to his heavenly Father's love, instead of vindictive wrath, vengeance, and frowns. I would tell him

that 'God so loved the world,' — the sinful creation, — that he gave his only begotten Son to die for it. Love alone can save the sinner from the error of his ways. It is the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance, or reformation. Let us, then, all look to this. Let all who love the sentiment of universal grace feel it in their warm hearts. Let their faith be that which worketh by love, and purifieth the heart, which overcometh the world, and which is productive of good fruits." (80)

"We say that ours is the divinest interpretation ever put upon the Gospel; that it solves life's mysteries as nothing else can, soothes and comforts as nothing else can, redeems and gladdens souls as nothing else can. We say that all around us are souls hungering for it, and that the world in all its most vital interests is suffering for the want of it. Do we believe this that we say about Universalism? Are we honest and conscientious in this broad and strong statement? If we are, shall we not preach Universalism? — preach it not only from the pulpit, but from the pews also? preach it in our families, on the streets, in our business places, and wherever we go, that souls may be born into its glorious light and liberty, broken hearts be bound up, and the fallen be lifted up to lead a devout and consecrated Christian life? Shall we not preach it by our money, by our educational enterprises, by our missionary efforts, by our labors in the cause of Sunday schools, and our cheerful following of Christ in all his blessed ways? We shall be without use, and have no title to the distinction we claim, if we do not so preach. We might as well have no principles, — it would be better that we make no profession, — if we cannot, or will not, put them into a Christian life, into living deeds. Surely, we ought to write our creeds in noble

ministries of mercy and love, and our truest records in the hearts we have comforted and blessed." (28)

ITS RELIGIOUS ELEMENT.

"The very first question which religion prompts in your souls, and in mine, is, In whom do you put your trust? On what do you predicate, practically and daily in life, your highest, supreme dependence? Is it upon your own wisdom, and strength, and foresight, or upon the Almighty power, the infinite goodness, the beneficent providence of God? This one emotion, this one feeling, as we have said, is an element common to all religions. But in Christianity it takes a particular form, and one which distinguishes the Gospel in this respect from every other system. So, too, among the various phases of Christianity prevailing among us to-day, we shall find that the religious element of Universalism possesses some marked features, distinguishing our faith from all others. It remains, then, under this head, and as briefly as possible, to point out these peculiarities, first in the Gospel itself, and then in our system viewed as a particular version of the Gospel.

"How is the divine sovereignty so to blend in with human nature, that man, in his very *dependence*, shall not also feel himself but an abject slave of God? This one question is at once the *problem of all religion and of human destiny*. It is the aim of all religion to develop in the human soul a conscious and absolute dependence upon the Deity, on one hand, and, on the other, a feeling of perfect and entire moral freedom. The Gospel, of all the religions ever known to the world, is the only one that ever completely solves this problem. So, too, throughout all Chris-

tendom, never did a theology afford a satisfactory solution of this matter, till it was done, and is now done, in Universalism.

“But how does Christianity succeed in harmonizing the supremacy of God over man, with a conscious moral freedom in man? It does it simply by introducing, between God’s sovereignty and man’s dependence, a third element, — *that of love*. The child depends upon its parent. But the child loves its parent, and therefore feels that he is not a servant, nor a slave, but a beloved son! The wife, also, depends upon her husband; but since there is perfect and mutual affection subsisting between the two, she feels perfectly free. Her very dependence, in fact, is a source of extreme happiness. She delights, with all her womanly heart, to trust in, to lean upon, the manly strength of her husband. Last of all, the Christian is conscious of his absolute dependence upon God. But he loves God with all the heart; and this is the simple means by which he attains to that precious and perfect liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Christianity, since it is pre-eminently the religion of love, completely solves the problem before us. But Judaism, being characteristically the religion of authority, having been designed principally as a practical assertion of God’s supremacy over our race, and since it was essentially wanting in the element of love, was also literally and truly a system of moral bondage.

“Here, then, we discover the grand and essential peculiarity in the religious element of the Gospel. It perfectly harmonizes the feeling of absolute dependence upon God with a conscious and entire freedom in man. It develops these two elements in the soul to their fullest extent and

intensity, and yet blends them into perfect oneness and harmony. It does this by means of love.

“But Universalism accomplishes precisely the same result; and herein we shall find at length that one great characteristic which distinguishes the religious element of our faith from that of every other theological system. From the constant and pervading practical spirit of the limitarian theology, it never has succeeded, and it never can succeed, as a general rule, in making man love God, so much as he actually fears him. The feeling of dependence upon Jehovah, therefore, which is so essential in all religion, here becomes allied with fear, instead of love. The divine sovereignty seems autocratic and despotic. It necessarily ‘gendereth to bondage;’ and limitarianism is thus, so far as concerns the practical solution of the great problem already stated, an out-and-out failure. The soul, under the influence of this system, still sticks fast in the mire of Judaism; and it rarely, if ever, attains to the full liberty of the children of God. The spirit still weeps beside the streams of Babylon; while the tuneless harp, hung upon the willow, refuses to wake the song of deliverance and complete triumph.

“It is not thus with the religious element of Universalism. Ours is theoretically and practically a religion of love. This element completely saturates our theology. Our constant hymn of gratitude and praise is, ‘God so loved the world.’ ‘We love him because he first loved us.’ This one sentiment forms the converging centre, so to speak, of our whole system, and all our preaching. And this is the grand reason why the Universalist, as he meekly bends at the altar of the Almighty Sovereign of worlds, still feels that he is himself as free as the wind that blows;

or as the eagle in his spiral flight into the heavens, where he looks on the sun in its splendor, and bathes in its golden light." (120)

UNIVERSALISM AND CHARACTER.

"If we were not convinced that Universalism, working out its legitimate results in human character, did not make better men—did not make men more 'Christian'—than Orthodoxy working out *its* legitimate results, we should have no heart in the work of defending Universalism. If our doctrine cannot, in its practical operation, *prove itself*, we should not feel called upon to thus work for it. That form of faith is nearest the truth which makes the best character. It becomes, therefore, a test question, What is the best character? We believe that an Exemplar of this character has once appeared on the earth; and from the brief, yet, we may say, exhaustive and graphic record of the facts in which that character was expressed, we deem it not difficult to determine what principles of theology it illustrated. Does any one need argument, to be convinced that the ruling and moulding principles of that character were perfect trust in God as the infinite Love, whom sinners as well as saints might address by the appellation of Father; as the impartial Benefactor, whose favors were bestowed alike upon the evil and the good; as the Fountain of forgiveness, to whom it would be proper to pray that even the vilest might be forgiven; as the Pattern of excellence, whom man was to imitate by loving his enemies, and overcoming evil with good; as the Shepherd of souls, that would leave the ninety and nine already in the fold of righteousness, and seek for the lost until found and

restored? We deem it much on the score of biblical proof that Christ affirmed these principles which make the very substance of Universalist theology; but, with an eye now to the popular argument, we deem it vastly more that *the perfect character of Christ was simply the embodiment of these principles.*

“It is a wretched mistake to suppose that the highest type of character is necessarily expressed by what are commonly known as outward forms of worship, accompanied, it may be, with much feeling. Orthodox piety, on this account, is sometimes thought to make a nearer approach to the true standard than is indicated by the less obtrusive, and we may frankly add less enthusiastic, practices which Universalism incites. This notion, if a just one, would certainly be fatal to Universalism. Our theology, it is freely confessed, does not incite as marked an enthusiasm, as frequent a resort to the outward or formal observance of religion, as Orthodoxy. But let not our Orthodox brother triumph over our concession; for the Catholic leads him in the particular named quite as much as he leads the Universalist.” ⁽³⁰⁾

SPECULATIVE AND PRACTICAL UNIVERSALISM.

“Our theory affirms the universal fatherhood with respect to God; the universal brotherhood with respect to man. It teaches that the mediatorial office of Christ involves the prospective reconciliation, and is to end in the eternal redemption of all the tribes and ranks of humanity. Stated thus, in its simplest terms, it presents the sublimest thought the mind can contemplate, and when we examine it in detail we find it as consistent as it is sublime. The

first article of the faith involves all the rest. There is a mutual dependence and a harmony between the parts. If God created us by his voluntary act, we belong to him, and have a claim upon his protection. If he created all human beings, then all human beings stand on an equality before him. They are gathered into one group, — having proceeded from the same source, being endowed with the same nature, and encompassed by the same providence. The fact that God is the universal Father involves the corresponding fact that all his creatures are brethren; and, if brethren, then heirs to whatever blessings eternal goodness may have prepared for his people.

“Men of large intelligence and mature reflection require the unmixed and crystal truth. They have no room in their precious brains for rubbish. All the space is appropriated by the trophies of wisdom. Their ‘*encyclopædiac*’ heads dine on the science of mankind, and still wander for want of meat.’ These men are the intellectual marshals of the race; who, in their lonely valor, storm the fortresses of error, and open wide, through calumny and suffering, the gates of freedom to all mankind.

“With a large toleration of the growth, and a wise recognition of the liberty, of the human mind, may we plant high the standard of *denominational culture*. Our ministry needs it; for it must engage well-organized battalions, not only bearing the plumes of fashion, and the banner of the league, but clad in the solid mail of scholarship. That man preaches Universalism most effectively, through whose mind it shines as light through a prism, having its rays separated into the minutest lines, and distributed to every taste and capacity. There is no doubt that a faith worthy to comprise ‘the fulness of the blessing of the Gos-

pel of Christ,' is susceptible of this manifold exhibition, having rays of truth so diversified in their hues and expressions that every soul must ultimately derive from it an awakening beam. ♣

"In taking leave of the topic, we think we express the prevailing sentiment of the denomination, when we suggest that the retreats of learning evoked into existence by Universalism should be no respecter of *sex*; that woman should enter here, side by side with man, participating in all his advantages, emulating his ambition, and becoming his queen-consort in mental sovereignty of the world; that her graceful and pliant nature — adorning the ever-shifting scenery of life, and drawing from man his noblest qualities — should be allowed to unfold to all the opportunities of Christian civilization, and to grace the noon-tide glory of the truth, whose early morning she watched by the sepulchre of Christ." (41)

"What is Universalism? Real, vital, *practical* Universalism, I mean. For we all have a theory, a belief, or creed. We can state our belief in God as a Father, in Christ as our Saviour, in man as our brother; but after all this is done, do we live Universalism? In our intercourse with our fellow-men, in our homes, in our public labors, in our business transactions, is our faith manifest in our lives? Are we sure it is not a delusion? Let us inquire.

"What does Universalism imply? We say that God is our Father, and if he is the Father of all, then all men are our brothers. Then the question arises, is this great brotherhood recognized?

"In the business world, does man deal with man as though each had the same wants, necessities, and desires,

and drew their existence from the same source of being, one as the other?

“ Oh that men might give to the heart all the broad, expansive love, all the noble self-sacrifice, all the glorious philanthropy, all the forgiveness in persecution, all faith in man, which its name comprehends !

“ Now and then a great and noble light gleams upon the world, dazzling us with its brightness, and showing us the possibilities of the human soul, and, I care not to what creed the intellect may subscribe, showing that our blessed faith may become, even on earth, a *practical* reality. And where are labors, actuated by that broad and all-embracing love, needed, if not in this world, where disappointments and trials meet us on every hand? Christ went about doing good. In him we have a perfect example of that ‘love which suffereth long, and is kind; which beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.’” (12)

ITS SPIRITUALITY.

“The power of a sect lies in the spiritual force it possesses; one great, earnest, spiritual soul has more weight than a multitude destitute of religious life. I trust we are coming to realize this fact, and that our labors hereafter will be more in the direction of spiritual life. I shall be glad in the day when to become a Universalist in faith shall be understood as bringing with it the obligation to be spiritual-minded, and to be united with the church. It has been almost so that to be a Universalist was to relieve one from all church obligations; and embracing the faith was held as no distinct intimation of any relation to the church.

The time has been when, with the multitudes of our believers, the church was regarded an Orthodox establishment, and they would have nothing to do with it.

“This state of things grew out of the desire to spread our faith, to plant it on the ruins of every religious error, to carry it by force of argument to every mind, to sound it everywhere as the voice of peace and the hope of heaven. The thought was not to build up a church and cultivate spiritual life, so much as to quiet human fears and awaken human hopes. It was the almost necessary extreme to which the Orthodox church, by its undevout and irrational doctrine, drove our early believers. The world was trembling on the brink of an imagined perdition. The gates of heaven were closed to all but a favored few. Even innocent infants were doomed to eternal agony. The Gospel was robbed of its loving Saviour, and an angry God, with a malicious devil for its eternal scourge, substituted in his stead. Salvation had become a hazardous game, played at dangerous odds with gods and devils. Our early Universalists saw this, and labored chiefly to set the world right in its doctrinal relations.

“They did a glorious work, and ever be their names honored for their brave and noble statements of Heaven’s truths; but they left much work undone. (And so with all reformers in every department of life.) They announced first principles; but too often forgot to ‘go on to perfection.’ They laid a grand foundation, or showed the ‘foundation that is laid, even Jesus Christ;’ but in their zeal for the foundation too often neglected to build thereon the graceful superstructure of a spiritual church. Many of them practically forgot that there was anything more to preach or believe than that God will have ‘all men to be

saved.' Deeply do I honor the fathers of Universalism in America, and our succeeding ministry. 'Their names are precious household words to my soul.' (83)

"That a consistent Universalist has a higher standard of morality than the adherent of any other system; that the influences of his faith are admirably calculated to awaken in his breast sentiments of true charity and 'good will to men;' and that, as a true man and reformer, his position should be second to none, — is conceded on all hands. But it is often thought, by those who have limited means of judging, that Universalism is wanting in *spirituality*; so that, however *good* and *moral* its professor may be, he is not, and cannot be, an *experimental* Christian. The writer was once told, after a long conversation with a prominent Baptist divine on the moral bearing of our respective views, 'Oh! I acknowledge that you have a most excellent system of *moral* philosophy, but do not dignify it with the name of *religion*; it is philanthropy, not piety.'

"Not to dwell upon the discrepancy involved in a supposition which is so prevalent among our opposers, may we crave the reader's candid and earnest attention to the few reflections we have to suggest upon this subject. And let me inquire what distinction between this doctrine and the more popular creeds of the day make such a conclusion necessary, or even plausible? Christians of all denominations will agree, that in the contemplation of Jesus, as a *Saviour*, arises all their love for, and devotedness to, his Gospel; and that in the remembrance of God's purposes of grace and mercy, they are constrained to be grateful for his goodness, and 'love him because he first loved us.' The ideas which have awakened the greatest zeal and enthusiasm known to modern times are those upon which two appar-

ently opposing systems have been founded. And though the wisdom of this world has arrayed them against each other, in truth they are perfectly harmonious.

“Again, it was the great truth of God’s impartiality, which constituted the source of zeal and enthusiasm in the Arminian. And although our brethren who proclaim this doctrine are more guarded than formerly, lest they should be thought to favor a still more liberal theory, and have, consequently, lost a portion of their power to excite enthusiasm, still, it must be acknowledged that the sentiment of the divine purposes and provisions for the salvation of *all* constitutes the great, all-important theme relied upon now to inspire hope and joy in the believer’s breast, and to incite spiritual devotion.” ⁽⁹⁸⁾

UNIVERSALISM AND REFORM.

“The nineteenth century has been marked, as no other has ever been, by the inauguration of certain great measures of reform. All, or nearly all these reforms, are the legitimate outgrowth, the practical carrying out, of the doctrines of Universalism. The anti-slavery reform was one of these. The system of involuntary, uncompensated servitude could find consistent advocates among those who held that God kept the greater part of the race in just such a condition of slavery, and that he was continually driving bargains with the devil, and buying or selling certain of his human chattels. But when men came to believe that God was no respecter of persons, that barbarian and Scythian, bond and free, were such no longer,—for all were as one in Christ Jesus,—then it became a holy duty to labor for the striking off of chains; and so men wrought.

Other churches were divided upon the question; but the Universalist church was true to its theory, that God had made of one blood all nations, and it was almost a unit in its pronounced and unmistakable utterances in behalf of liberty.

“So, again, with the question which, in our day, bids fair to be next for political consideration, as well as for solution by social scientists,—the true rights, privileges, and duties of woman. The sentiment of Universalism is not only that there shall be no unjust discriminations in the matter of servitude; it is that there shall be neither bond nor free, but mutual dependence, and mutual independence, whether between man and man, or man and woman; for it also declares that in Christ there shall be neither male nor female. Not only, therefore, is the present movement an outgrowth of Universalism, but it is endorsed and approved by this church, which has broken down the barrier, and welcomed to its pulpits, and rejoiced to find in them devoted, hard-working, patient, loving Christian pastors—some of its women. It is the only church which has recognized women as pastors. Another permits them to preach, but declines to ordain them.”⁽⁴⁾

“The reform movements, the great benevolent schemes of the age, all of which, in some way or other, are seeking the good of humanity, are a part of it. A thousand instrumentalities of this kind, which do not bear its name, have their origin in Christianity. They were prompted and carried into action by that spirit of love and benevolence which it has imparted to men. How beautiful and how potent are many of the great movements of our times!—seeking to restore the fallen, to enlighten the ignorant,

relieve the sorrowing, do away with enmity, and restore the world to peace and brotherhood.

“In contemplating these movements we are forcibly struck with the fact that they are peculiar to our own day, — the growth of our own age. Scarcely any of them date farther back than the present century. Temperance societies, peace societies, prison-discipline societies, societies for the abolition of the gallows, homes for the destitute, homes for the fallen, — when were these heard of previously to our own time? And it is an interesting question, Why it is they have had a commencement just now; why they were not started centuries before, and ages past have blessed the world with their benign influence? They have been ushered in at a late period. Why did they not come long ago, to stay the tide of misery and wrong that has flooded the earth? The answer to this question can be known to but a few; I say to but a few, for only a few as yet are able to comprehend it. But, to those who are prepared to understand it, it is very clear. We have said that these schemes, for the bettering of the condition of man, had their origin in that spirit of love and benevolence which Christianity imparted to mankind. And the reason they did not sooner appear is because this spirit has not been fully brought out and carried into action until the present day. The great truths of Christianity have been buried amid corruption and error. Its real character, veiled and hid from men, has never, until now, been understood. A few, here and there one, through the ages gone, have discerned its true spirit. But for the most part it has been unknown. Its free and glorious spirit has been enchained and narrowed down to creeds and systems. Its true action has never been permitted. For the most part it was a thing to be

feared, rather than loved ; to be shunned, rather than embraced. But light has spread apace. The darkness that hung about it has been dispelled, and its true character and glory are manifest. Now its aspect is lovely ; in its utterance there is a divine melody ; in its teachings a glad and holy truth. The paternity of God and the brotherhood of man, — God as the Father of all, mankind as one family ; love, — the boundless love of God, and love among men ; unity, peace, harmony, holiness, — these are its principles. Only of late though, as we have shown, has it been generally recognized in this character. And until this, the re-form movements of our time had no being. *It is Universalism that gave them birth.* They came not until this came. It was necessary that this should first appear, to give man true views of his own nature and his relation to his race. It was necessary that this should come, with its pure teachings of love and brotherhood, to unite the hearts of men, and awaken in them a benevolent interest in each other's good. When this was done, man was aroused to efforts for his brother's welfare. Had the views we cherish not yet been proclaimed, the noble spectacle we witness of so much doing for humanity would be unseen. There is not one of the reformatory efforts of which we have spoken but that is founded on the 'faith we preach ;' their action, so far as it is just and true, so far as it seeks the good of man, is wholly, entirely, one with ours. Let the doctrines we profess and teach be banished from among men, and these movements would die out in a day.

"The spirit and principle of Universalism are manifest in everything that the people of our age acknowledge as good. The literature and action of the times, all that is written or done, is called forth by it. It has infused itself

into every department of life, and is transforming all things into its own image. Most rapidly are our principles influencing and changing the character of the world. As the burning sun dispels the mists, as the clear light drives out the darkness, so is the truth we have proclaimed banishing the night of terror." (26)

EDUCATION AND UNIVERSALISM.

"Education includes the training of the mind, as well as the drawing forth or exercising of its powers. This training embraces that system of means usually resorted to, not only at home, but in the schools of learning, by which knowledge and information are instilled into the young mind. It is, however, not to be forgotten that education does not terminate with school-boy days; it must continue through life; for as long as knowledge can be acquired, so long must education continue. It is the work of life. . . .

"What ought to be expected of Universalism? What are the hopes which it inspires? What of good to the race does it hold forth? Is it to flourish for a time, and then go out, leaving no vestige of its existence and of its influence?

"We say that much is expected of our faith. Its hopes are of enlarged views, embracing the truth that God is the Father of the race, and that all men are brethren. The hopes inspired are that good will to man is to prevail, and men are to look upon and treat each other as brethren; and this is the good that this faith holds out to men in this life, preparing them by these means for the endless future. And if the advocates of this faith be true to their mission,

it will flourish and leave the results of its influence on the world, exerting its power for the welfare of man.

“Are there any reasons why such expectations should be cherished? The brotherhood of man is a great truth. The ties which bind man to man are of such a nature as to lead men to esteem all men as the children of a common Father. This idea has been made prominent in the teachings of Universalism. It should always be a prominent feature in the faith, for children of a common Father will always feel, if they are imbued with the spirit of the faith, that they are to do good to all men as they have opportunity. Efforts will be put forth, in the power of kindness and love, to reclaim the wandering and to restore the lost. Institutions will grow up, springing from the noble and more exalted principles of man's being, which will foster and cherish those benign feelings that have too long been smothered under ceremonies and forms. Religion has been too often a cold abstraction of dogmatic formulas of doctrine; and has shown too little of its influence and power as a life. Principles are always sheltered under a withering dogmatism, unless they can have room to expand and grow, and be felt in works that alleviate human woe, and elevate the fallen.

“We insist that it is not unreasonable that such results as these which are just presented should flow from Universalism. We believe that, when this faith shall be felt in the hearts of men, influencing and controlling their lives, and causing them to act out their professions, then a power will be put forth such as the primitive Christians exhibited to the world. It was the witnessing the results of such a faith that overcame all the obstacles that were in the way of their success, or that were interposed by human

power to arrest its progress. The like faith and the like works would be attended with the like results. The same Christian faith which existed, and went forth conquering and to conquer, eighteen hundred years ago, is with us now, and has lost none of its power; it is stronger and more powerful for the accomplishment of good than it ever has been. There is now the fact that Christianity prevails among the most enlightened nations of the earth, in some form, and the leaven is leavening, and will leaven the whole lump.

“Universalism, if its principles are carried out as they should be in the heart and life, must become a power and will be felt in all the ramifications of human society. It must needs be that those principles which contemplate and act upon the brotherhood of the race will go out in issues that will soften the hard heart, and control the actions of men by the power of love. Human sympathy, exhibited in kindness and charity, will run along the very fibres of our natures, and warm and enliven the coldness and indifference of those who disregard and trample under foot the noblest aspirations of our nature.” ⁽⁹⁴⁾

PART XII.

THE COMFORT OF UNIVERSALISM.

IT LEADS TO RESIGNATION.

In this closing Part of our labors, it is only necessary for the compiler to remark, that there is no time in a man's earth-life, when Universalism is of so much value as in the day of sickness and death; in his trials and afflictions. If the doctrine is lived, we shall be willing to lie down in sickness and death, and be resigned to Him who calls us hence, to be here no more.

It is our prayer that these pages may give the reader a clearer insight of the heavenly home, and help us to lean on the strong arm of One who hath taught us that "to live is Christ; to die is gain!" We should all so live, that we may be in Christ *now* and *always*, that we may begin our heavenly life on earth. (c)

"Heaven is not so far from the believing soul as we are apt to consider it. We are prone to think of it as a place all bright and beautiful, far away beyond the skies; and many of us live here below, groping darkly on our way, and, by our daily acts, saying unto our brother-man, '*Here* is our position, our delight; *here* is our abiding place;' and the sober, earnest reflection upon that unseen yet glorified shore is not at all felt or allowed.

"But he who looks beyond, with the eye of faith, brings.

heaven nearer, and upon this earth the light begins which is perfected only as we 'go up higher.' Then it is that we can see the loved ones, — not lost, but gone before, — fully inheriting the promise, and made happy forever in the presence of the Lamb. Yes, we catch, as it were, hold of the chain which God is forming to bring *us* unto himself; and as tie after tie here is riven, we feel that there is a new link binding us more closely to the Infinite, uniting our hearts more firmly to things above.

"'Tis but a few days since our heavenly Father saw fit to transplant from this earthly garden, *even from our own household*, a tender bud of promise. For months and years we had looked on the bright blossom, and our hearts went out in love and pity for the motherless one; so we drew our treasure closely to our bosoms, and endeavored to nurture and watch over the tender flower which God had thus lent." (127)

THE SUSTAINING POWER OF UNIVERSALISM.

"It is freely admitted, by every one, that a religion which fails to comfort and sustain the soul in its hour of bereavement and trial is utterly worthless. When the soul in its deep affliction turns to the religion in which it trusts, and seeks for comfort, but seeks in vain, no better proof is wanting of the insufficiency and utter worthlessness of the religion itself. It is not in times of prosperity and worldly success, when everything smiles joyously around us, and true-hearted friends vie with each other in their efforts to render us happy, that we can test fairly and fully the superiority of this, or that, or the other system of religious faith. But it is when storms of sorrow and be-

reavement come upon us, and we are called to pass through dark scenes of trial, and bid adieu to the dearest of earth's friends.

"Much has been written relative to the comparative value and excellency of Universalism and its opposite to bring comfort and peace to the heart of the bereaved mourner. Nor is it strange that, in all investigations of this kind, we should each give the preference to our own system of faith. This is perfectly natural, and what might reasonably be expected.

"Although not yet a remarkably *old* man, it has been my lot to witness numerous instances of the sustaining power of Universalism; not only to the individual who is called to pass through the valley of death, but also to the surviving relatives and friends. I have known instances where the bereaved parent or companion, although professing belief in the doctrine of endless misery, has turned instinctively to Universalism to find that comfort and support which the soul needed and longed for, but which it could not gain from its faith in the doctrine of a future endless hell. I have now on my mind an instance of this very kind, which produced a powerful and lasting impression on my own feelings, and which I will briefly relate:—

"I was called to attend the funeral of a man who had left a wife and several children in deep affliction. I was an entire stranger in the family, not one member of which was in the habit of attending my meetings; and hence I was at a loss to understand why *my* services should have been requested to minister consolation to the mourners. At the hour designated, I repaired to the house of death, and received an introduction to the afflicted and almost heart-broken widow. After the formality of the introduction had

been gone through with, she said to me, 'You are doubtless somewhat surprised at being called upon to officiate at the funeral of my husband, as neither the deceased nor any of the surviving members of the family have ever professed faith in the doctrine you preach.' I replied that the invitation to attend her husband's funeral *did* cause me some surprise; but that, if she was sincere in requesting it, I would gladly do what lay in my power to direct her to the only sure Fountain of comfort and consolation. She then went on to inform me that it was her own most earnest wish, as well as that of all her children, that I should preach her husband's funeral sermon. He himself was not a member of any church; 'but,' said she, 'he was one of the best of husbands and fathers, and a *practical Christian*; his death has afflicted us more than we can bear; and we were not willing to hear him sentenced to hell, simply because he had made no public profession of religion, as would doubtless have been the case, had we employed a preacher of endless misery. We feel that, if comfort can be derived from any source, we shall find it in the doctrine you preach.' " (40)

THE MINISTRY OF UNIVERSALISM.

"The ministry of Universalism *is* a ministry of hope. The importance of this principle is universally recognized by the sacred writers. Christ is called our *hope*. Well has it been said that man is a *creature* of hope, and, were it not for this, he could not go on, as he now does, struggling with the cares of life. Hope, in short, has a balm for every trial. When *sickness* lays its emaciating hand upon us, hope speaks of health to be gained, and of pleasures to

be enjoyed. When *death* enters our abodes, and singles out, as oft he loves to do, a shining mark, at whom the unerring shaft is sped, and when our loved and precious ones fade from our sight, and the heart sinks and almost rebels under the heavy blow imposed, then, like a sweet cherub from the skies, hope points above, where dwelleth the infinite Father, saying : —

“ ‘ They’re in his hands, and at heaven’s gate
They’ll wait to welcome thee.’ ”

“ The consummation of God’s moral government, to which it points us, is truly grand and sublime. Beyond it, imagination, in its far-wandering course, cannot soar ; in it, thought is lost, and the mind so overwhelmed by the greatness of the theme, that we can only kneel down and adore. Great God, blessed be thy name for the Gospel hope ! It is our joy in life ; it shall be our solace in death, and its fruition our bliss in heaven.

“ The ministry of Universalism is one of *comfort*. When about to leave his disciples and ascend to the Father, Jesus declared that he would send them the *Comforter*, who should testify of him and lead them into all truth. The Comforter has come, and has assured us that a *Father is at the helm of the universe*, moving on his affairs undisturbed by the actions and passions of men. No other system of religion represents the Divine Being in so endearing a light. *He* to whom we look for every blessing ; *he* who rolls in their stupendous orbits the spheres that shine and dazzle above us ; *he* who spake, and the pillars of the universe stood erect, — he it is, that has declared himself our Father. Grand and momentous fact ! The great centre,

mainspring, and life of the Gospel. Is *he* my Father? 'What foe have I to fear?' Is he my Father? Then no more will I despair when sin presses upon me, and temptation assails. Is he my *Father*? Then forgiveness awaits me when I repent, and bliss is in store for me when I arrive at home. It is this which whispers in all the discipline of mortal existence, 'Peace, troubled soul!' God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb; fear no ill, therefore!

"Again, the ministry of Universalism is one of comfort, as it assures us that a better land is in store for us when we shall have passed the Jordan of death. We all know that we must die, — at least we *say* we do. But do we realize it as we ought? Do we feel that, in a few more days, at most, the winding-sheet will be wrapped around us, and the narrow house receive its tenant; that our friends will meet and follow us with slow and measured tread to the home of all living? Do we realize that these eyes must soon be darkened? these ears that drink in the gushing melody of life be stopped? this heart that is beating so mysteriously within us soon cease its throbbing? And, then, who can tell us what is death? Who has ever come back from the shores of the unseen world to recount the sensations that swept through the soul, with more than electric rapidity, when conscious that, like a setting star, it was trembling 'twixt earth and heaven? Oh, could these thoughts be ever present with us, we should not be so insensible as we now are to the great doctrine of life and immortality beyond the grave! But when we come to lie down upon the bed of death ourselves, the vanity of our pursuits, and the emptiness of our lives, stare us in the face. Then sweeter than the music of the harp, as it floats over the sleeping waters of the lake, sound the words of cheer,

as one speaks of that home of the spirit, and the company that dwell therein.

“Moreover, it is one of the peculiar characteristics of the ministry of Universalism that it comforts *all* who mourn. Formerly I was wont to marvel, and I have heard others do likewise, and ask why is it, that when one who has been connected with no religious society, and who perchance has led a sinful and dissolute life, is taken from us, one professing the faith of a world’s redemption is *almost* always called to officiate at the funeral solemnities? It is simply because they, — and I say it with no feelings of egotism, but with the firmest conviction of its truthfulness, — because they, and they only, *can* obey the Gospel injunction, and comfort *all* that mourn.” (48)

UNIVERSALISM THE CONSOLER.

“Universalism is adapted to man’s wants as the creature of sorrow. We are all mourners. Our friends sleep beneath the clods of the valley, and from their quiet resting-places no voice of assurance and of hope can come. If we turn to ‘all the forms that men devise,’ we are pained with the thought of the emptiness and poverty that everywhere mock our groans. They have no sympathy for us. They so ‘pervert the right ways of the Lord’ as to make ‘some mad and others melancholy,’ and under this blighting influence this fair world becomes a gloomy prison, and life itself a cruel bitter.”

“But Universalism is ‘the one thing needful.’ It is affirmed, I know, that it will not do to die by; yet no man ever died by it, that did not die in peace. Are they who abandon it for something else, or who are robbed of its

consolations for sectarian gain, qualified to judge of its capacity, where they have not tried it? Can we with impunity insult our reason by affirming that a belief in the triumph of good over evil is not calculated to comfort and sustain the dying? The truth is, here is our only hope.

“So men flee to Universalism, at least to its *spirit*, and lay hold upon the hope set before them. And think you, my brethren, that such a faith can die? Shall the last refuge of the afflicted be taken from them? Will you withhold the only restorative from the dying, and torture the struggling spirit as it sighs for peace? Nay, this faith will not forsake the world. There is a great work for it to do here, — a work which no other faith can perform, and its power to comfort the mourner demands for it a home among the children of sorrow. It will remain there as the bright image of the Eternal; pleading with the sinners to be reconciled to God; guiding the wanderer to virtue and peace, and, standing by the portals of the tomb, it will unfold the mysteries of a bright future, and fill the soul with unutterable joy.” (204)

“We need such consolations, for our afflictions and bereavements are great. Death and misfortune sweep in amidst our most precious treasures, and desolation is around us. We need something strong on which we can lean, and something that is certain. We find it only in the truth revealed in the paternal character of God. Any doctrine, or dream of doctrine, that shadows that truth, makes the consolations of God small to the bleeding heart. The wrung spirit doubts everything when it doubts that. The foundations of all hope are broken up, and fear — terrible and awful fear — is the whole of life. But when the great truth of the divine paternity is kept clearly before the

mind, we have hope for the world. We dare not separate one child from its Father's love.

"We dare not commit the irreverence of declaring that one soul is given over to sin, and will suffer eternally. No! death is not only a destroyer, but also a redeemer; not simply in itself, as an agency to dissolve the earthly tenement, but as it is ordained of God to bring the spirit into other and holier influences, by striking off the chains that bound it to materiality. If death here is awful, it shall be seen in eternity in its true light. It shall there be classed with those universal laws that are acknowledged to be good, and stamped with the perfections of the Deity. 'Are the consolations of God small with thee?'" (20).

UNIVERSALISM IN SICKNESS.

"What unspeakable consolations Universalism affords in sickness! How far superior to anything that can be derived from all other *faiths* in the world! And the reason is obvious. Ours is a faith of universal application. It embraces all men. It satisfies all good desires; it supplies all wants, and fills the whole mind with peace; it leaves no room for doubt or distrust; it banishes fear and begets confidence; it melts the obdurate heart in penitence, and pours into it forgiving love; it brings Christ to the bosom; unfolds our destiny in his glorified state, and makes known the will and purpose of our Father. It enfolds us, with all intelligences, in the arms of infinite love; and bids us move onward and upward in the 'ways of wisdom' and goodness, during endless ages of bliss.

"What more could we ask? Nay, how far short of the reality are our best conceptions of the divine economy! It

is not surprising, then, that Universalists should cling to their faith at all times and under all circumstances; that they should rejoice in its strength and beauty when in health and prosperity, and gather consolation and support from it in sickness and adversity. And could those of an opposite faith — those whose minds are filled with doubts and fears and awful forebodings of ill for themselves or their fellow-beings — but know what are the ‘reasons of the hope within us,’ they would cease to wonder at the tenacity with which we hold to the doctrine that ‘God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.’ Could they but experience the solace of our faith under trials, and feel the peaceful influences it sheds around the death-bed, they would eagerly embrace it, exclaiming, ‘The half has not been told us.’ This they cannot do till more fully enlightened, and brought to greater visions of salvation. This is the work of the Gospel of Christ. As servants of our Lord, we may labor to bring men from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty. And, perhaps, no more effectual means can be brought into requisition for this purpose than the laying before men the actual experience of Universalists.” (106)

“Universalism is a doctrine which sustains the soul in sickness. In our lucid moments, during our late confinement, we had abundant opportunity to reflect upon the nature and tendency of the doctrine we had preached. It appeared to the soul a glorious doctrine. Nothing can be so rich in sickness and death as a strong faith in the doctrine of Universalism. The fact which predominated in our mind was, that it is God’s doctrine, — the doctrine which went forth out of his mouth in olden time, — the doctrine which is revealed in the Bible. It is clearly revealed

in that blessed book; and there is not a passage of that book, not even a threatening of punishment, which, when it is properly understood, does not fully, and in every respect, harmonize with Universalism. We repeat it, 'The Lord will not cast off forever'; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.' Lam. iii. 31-33. Glory to God for this assurance! This, then, is a certain fact, — that Universalism is the doctrine of God's word. We could rejoice, while lying upon our sick-bed, that we had defended this doctrine. It seemed to us, at one time, that an angel spoke to us, and said, 'You have done well; you have done as much as one man could do in the same length of time; you have preached much in favor of the truth; you have defended it in the "Trumpet;" — well done, good and faithful servant!' This was one of the happy illusions that came over the mind, while it was weakened by disease. Now that we are getting strong again, we shall return to our work. We have no new doctrine to propose. Our faith in Universalism is strong as ever. We say, with great fullness of feeling, 'Give us Universalism in health; Universalism in sickness; Universalism in life; and Universalism in death.' " (3)

IN SICKNESS AND DEATH.

"I remark, once more, that Universalism is more excellent than any other religion in sickness and death. What is it that makes sickness tolerable; that sickness especially which we are conscious will soon terminate our career through this sublunary state? And when death approaches to freeze the life-currents in our veins, to paralyze our

busy-beating heart, choke off our breath, and still the throbbing of our weary brain; when we are sinking into our departure from the world, which has so long been the scene of our labors and trials, our attachments and joys, — what is it, then, that will support the spirit and render it strong and cheerful in that solemnest hour of its existence? Is it not alone the love of God, and the dear fellowship of the Saviour? I am sure no man ever found supporting consolation in that hour from the doctrine of endless misery. Prospects from the fabled regions of the damned, flashing upon the vision of the departing, would blast all of sacred peace and trust that had softened and hallowed the pillow on which rests his dying head. But speak to him of God's love, point him to Calvary, where Christ tasted death for every man, reveal to him the great truths of Universalism, until you show him, beyond all further doubt, that the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed, that this mortal must put on immortality, and this corruptible, incorruption, and then shall be brought to pass the saying, 'Death is swallowed up in victory;' and that at last there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away, — do this, and you shall see a trusting smile kindling on that thin, pale face, and light, as if from eternity, streaming through those dying eyes; he is filled with resignation and peace, and he soon feels those benignant angels, Faith and Hope, clasping him from the dissolving clay into the realms of eternal beauty, and light, and love.

"Oh, Universalism is sweet, it is glorious to die by! I have seen the aged lie down with it, as if to a gentle sleep, where they sought refreshment from 'the weary, torrid day of life;' I have seen manhood and womanhood, in the full

maturity of their powers, take their departure to that bourn whence no traveller returns, as resignedly, and even cheerfully, as if setting out on a journey to the old fireside where first they drank in a mother's love; I have seen the young die, when life was fresh and pregnant with its highest hopes, with such composure, or with such surprising Christian triumph, as to astonish all who beheld them; — and in every case the religion of which I am speaking was the glorious agent of these beautiful and heavenly results. Here, as everywhere else, it is 'the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' In its presence death loses its sting, and the grave its victory." (32)

UNIVERSALISM IN DEATH.

"How often do we hear it asserted that Universalism may do in life, but it can never answer the wants of the dying! Strange, indeed, does it seem to the believer in the 'great salvation,' that a doctrine acknowledged even by its enemies to be a good one, — that a doctrine, teaching the unbounded benevolence of the Deity, should not be calculated to support and give consolation to the oppressed spirit in the hour of the last trial. We can hardly believe that the opposers of God's impartial grace mean what they say, when they declare that the faith of universal salvation can give no peace in the hour of death, because such assertions stand opposed to, our inmost feelings, — stand opposed to all our ideas of consolation, and the truth of the Scriptures. What is Universalism? Is it not to believe that God is good; that he is kind and forgiving, and a God who will save all souls from sin and death, and take them to himself? And yet it is affirmed that such a doc-

trine may do to live by, but not to die by! What is good to die by?" (6)

"Universalism gives entire peace and joy to the soul in the dying hour. The expiring parents have no cruel misgivings for themselves or each other. With eyes quivering in death, the believer can take his last adieu of all surviving friends. But not so the opposer of this glorious doctrine. Let the soul be seized with doubt as to the final welfare of some tender relative, and it would fix a barbed arrow in the heart, poisonous and painful as it is cruel. Universalism, therefore, is as good as any other doctrine in life, and unspeakably better in the hour of death. The believer can kiss the rod of affliction and chastisement with filial submission. His faith embraces his relatives, friends, acquaintances, foes, and all his fellow-beings. He believes that in the resurrection they will be as 'the angels of God in heaven,' and die no more. And, believing, he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Passing strange that any should think that this glorious system is not as an anchor to the soul in the hour of dissolution!" (7)

"*Universalism in death.* It will do to die by. We have found frequent occasions to allude to the sustaining influence of Universalism in the hour of death. We repeat, for the hundredth time, that we do not urge these cases as infallible tests of the truth of our doctrine; and yet the candid and reflecting mind can draw much hope and consolation from them. They indeed furnish a species of evidence, and perhaps one of the most effectual, when considered in respect to the nature, the reasonableness, and fitness of things. For what more natural than impulses of joy, when the departing spirit can lay all its cares and anxieties upon the unfailing arm of a God of love, and repose its

drooping head upon the breast of a merciful and compassionate Saviour. —

“‘And breathe its life out sweetly there.’” (107)

“Is Universalism a support in death? How strange the question, when the triumphant, peaceful exits of so many rejoicing Universalists so plainly and conclusively demonstrate the affirmative! Indeed, *no one can die in the faith of Universalism* whose departure is not peaceful and hopeful. In the light of the apostolic testimony to the heavenly doctrine of universal grace, how precious to the true Universalist is the consideration that the almighty Disposer of events is also the Father and Friend of *all* men! How sweet to the trusting disciple, when in resignation he parts with dear friends, to realize the truth of Paul’s representation that we are under grace! While, in scenes of suffering and of death, the mourning soul is experiencing those feelings of anguish which seem almost to menace the vital elements of being itself, how sweet to the believing heart, in such overwhelming scenes of sorrow, is the scriptural teaching that ‘*God is love*’! It is the purest of all ‘the milk of human kindness’ to sympathize with the sorrowing, to mourn over the exit of those who were dear by the ties of strongest hold; and the doctrine of divine grace is the only comforter, as by it we can realize, in faith and trust, the fact that they are enjoying (or will in the immortal resurrection enjoy) the bliss of an endless life! True, indeed, is the Psalmist’s testimony, that ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.’ How consoling the thought! In the midst of trouble, in the most distressing and embarrassing circumstances, in the article of death itself, he who trusts in the

justice and goodness, the wisdom and power of God, who is love, has a never-failing support. Blessed teaching is the renewing, and sanctifying, and beautifying doctrine of universal, impartial, efficient grace!" (106)

"What, then, is the result? That Universalism and its doctrine of the future can alone answer the needs of the soul, or satisfy them with the rest and perfect peace promised in Christ. Universalism alone writes words of cheer in every sick-room, and above every dying couch. Universalism alone illumines every dark hour with the light of God's purpose, and shows all mysteries resolved,—all questions answered,—all occasions of anxiety removed in the sublime solutions of eternity, as all pain, and sorrow, and sin are made to result in good, and all souls are brought home. Universalism alone, therefore, has relief for every perplexity, hope triumphing over all despondency, and encouragement to work, however labor may seem to be spent to no purpose, and seed sown only to die in the ground. . . . No seed of truth can ever die. No labor of love be expended for naught. As Whittier, catching its spirit, has said, 'In the economy of God, no effort, however small, put forth for a right cause, shall fail of its effect; no voice, however feeble, lifted up for truth, ever dies amidst the confused voices of time; but through discords of sin and sorrow, pain and wrong, it rises a deathless melody to blend with the *great harmony* of a reconciled universe!' " (40)

ITS STRENGTHENING INFLUENCE.

"Mrs. Mary Babcock, aged seventy-six years and six months, after a most distressing illness of a week, passed out of the body into her glorious home above on the second

day of September, 1864. This change occurred to her at the home of her son-in-law, brother Joseph Green, of Melrose, Mass., where she had lived many years, her husband having preceded her in his passage to the spirit-world long time ago. From the accounts of her sickness and death which we have received from various persons, she was most happy in the thought that this was to be her last sickness, and would terminate in her release from the body, — her resurrection into a more glorious existence. Her hope in the future world of blessedness was ‘sure and steadfast, as an anchor to her soul.’ She looked not backward, but forward to her home in heaven and dear ones who had gone before, and were ‘waiting her arrival there.’ One who was with her constantly in these last hours, writes : —

“ ‘She thought from the first she should not recover, and had no wish to. She was so patient, never uttering a word of complaint through all her dreadful suffering. She talked a great deal about *going home* — *going home* — *blessed home!* and what a disappointment it would be to her if she was not permitted to take her departure *now*. She asked the doctor if he did not think “she was ALMOST HOME.” Oh! she was so happy; and her joy was such a comfort to us in the midst of our sorrow! It rendered the thought of separation so much easier to bear. She made every arrangement during her sickness for her funeral, selected her clothing, and had it deposited in a separate drawer; and all this, when she was so sick, in so great distress, and when her physician said she could not live twelve hours.’

“ ‘Another writes, ‘Her death was beautiful; she was so resigned; so hopeful; so Christian in her faith.’ . . . ‘What a blessing to have a dear friend pass out of this life into the future, so resigned and tranquil!’

"So passed away this mother in our Israel,—this sister in Christ,—who, for so many years, had rejoiced day by day in the great and blessed truth of our holy religion. And yet how many thousands all around us are perpetually presenting, as the main objection to our faith, that it never supports the dying. It is a very pleasant thought in youth and health and prosperity, but when age with its hoary locks approaches, and sickness and death come, its pleasing dreams are dissipated, and nothing but eternity, fearfulness, and despair greet the soul as it contemplates the future! This is what men think, it is what they say, what they preach, what they write, what they send broadcast throughout the world in tracts and papers, and pamphlets and books. But how little do such know of the *power* of our faith, founded as it is in the infinite love of our heavenly Father, and the glorious teachings of his dear Son, to lift up and sustain and tranquillize the soul even in its darkest moments. Could they witness what we have witnessed of the power of this faith,—dispelling all fear of death, all thoughts of the grave in the soul about to depart, so that its victory over physical suffering, over all earthly trial, sorrow, and anxiety, and over death itself, was perfect, going out at last in a radiance of glory, and in the enjoyment of the sweetest peace,—could they see all this, we repeat, as we have seen it in one whose faith included the salvation of the world in its warm embrace, how changed would become their views, relative to this subject!" (115)

GOOD FOR LIFE AND DEATH.

Whatever is good for life, must be good for death. For, if we are prepared to live, and to live right, to the honor

and glory of God, we are prepared to die. "*To live is Christ,*" and when we live in Christ, as we may, we are in a happy state and condition. We take the following from the "*Ladies' Repository*;" it is an extract from a letter to the editor of that periodical:—

2 "A cousin of mine, the night before his death, said to his daughter in substance: 'My child, it has been said by some that Universalism might do to live by, but that it would not do to die by. I have lived all my life a Universalist, having obeyed as nearly as I could its precepts, and now I am dying. As I have lain here night after night, drawing nearer and nearer to that portal through which we must all pass, my faith in Universalism has grown stronger and stronger, its breadth and depth purer and brighter; and I now say to you, live as I have tried to live, cherishing this beautiful faith, and, believe me, there will never come a time either in days of gladness or sorrow, in life or in death, when its truths will fail you. They have sustained me through these long days and nights of terrible suffering, and now that pain has nearly ceased, and mine eyes almost behold the glory of the New Jerusalem, I can say without one shadow of doubt or fear, as I have lived, so can I die, a firm believer in Universalism.'" To which the editor adds:—

"We have, ourself, stood by the dying bed of one who had, through long years of care and suffering, enjoyed the faith of which our friend speaks in her letter, and we asked her that question, — whether Universalism would do to die by, as well as to live by. She answered, unqualifiedly, 'Yes;' and now no testimony can offset hers, in our mind, for 'one affirmative is worth a thousand negatives,' in this case, to us. Henceforth, we shall still recommend Universalism for the dying hour, as well as for all the living years,

whether they are years of joys or sorrow. Blessed be God for such a faith!" (11)

"Should fortune fail and cherished friends betray,
The aged wither and the young decay,
One comfort still to upright souls is given, —
The best of all things, — 'tis the hope of heaven."

"Our fame may fade and our good name be lost,
Still on life's sea all earthly hopes be tossed,
When we o'er long with care and want have striven;
Yet sweeter still grows the 'fond hope of heaven.'"

"When to fair climes our 'dearly loved' repair,
Find life a home and death a pillow there;
When time and distance have our bosoms riven,
How sweet to hope 'we meet again in heaven'!"

"When we, assembling, in the temple bring
To God, all good, the heart's full offering,
Upon that day, the best of all the seven,
What then so joyous as the 'hope of heaven'?"

"When time shall number all our precious years,
And in our sky the dim age-star appears;
When death's cold shadows hang above life's even,
We'll calmly die with a 'full hope of heaven.'" (22)

"Three years ago this morn my sainted father's mission upon earth ended, and he passed on to his higher life.

"A greater part of the time during these three years I have been confined to the sick-room. Twice has the spark of life flickered so faintly that death seemed inevitable. And yet, the all-loving Father, who holds us in the hollow of his hand, has spared me to the present time. And now, on this anniversary of my father's heavenly birth, I would honor his memory by publicly testifying to the blessedness and sufficiency of that glorious faith, so near and so dear

to his heart, — for which he so earnestly and untiringly labored; to the promulgation of which he consecrated his life. We often hear it said that ‘Universalism will do to live by, but not to die by.’ But far, *very* far, from the truth is this assertion. While Universalism is good to live by, it is *grand*, it is *glorious*, to die by. When the shadows of death seemed gathering about me, the ‘grim messenger’ close at hand, and all of earth receding, then had I an opportunity to test the sufficiency, the value, the entireness of Universalism. No darkness or gloom gathered over the soul, no fear of the approaching hour. Our blessed faith illumined the long way with glorious brightness, robbed death of all terror, the grave of all gloom. It whispered to me of a Father infinite in love and mercy; of a risen Saviour and elder Brother, blessing and forgiving; of a reunion with the dear departed; of a home of never-ending joy; of an end of sin, of weariness, of pain; and my soul was filled with unutterable peace and rest.

“O blessed faith! O glorious truth!
Which Christ to us hath given;
Though death may sunder hearts on earth,
We all shall meet in heaven,
Nor pain, nor grief, nor parting come
To cloud the glory of our home.’

“Many of the fathers in our Israel, noble defenders of our faith, have gone home to higher mansions in our Father’s house within the past three years; but we have many souls, noble and true, among our younger brethren; and may we not hope that the mantles of these fathers have fallen upon them, and that they will labor as self-sacrificingly, as untiringly, as faithfully, for the truth as it is in

Jesus, as did they? God grant it may be so, and that a glorious future, rich in love to God and man, rich in Christian forbearance and charity, rich in all that is good and true, may await Universalism in our land." (181)

THE COMFORT OF UNIVERSALISM.

How can men derive comfort from anything short of the truth, when they are concerned in the matter? If one believes it will be well with the departed, because they died in the faith, because they had a hope in Christ, how is it with them when their friends leave no evidence that they were faithful unto death? Surely, they need comfort when they are thus situated; and it is thus with a *large* number of the human family. It is at such times that they reach out after the truth, and are comforted with the slightest evidence to them. They may believe that "Christ died for *the ungodly*," that "he tasted death for every man," and that all have an interest in his death. "Hope thou in God," as the Father of all spirits, and we may be comforted. (c)

"It has been remarked that Christians, of whatever creed, have hope in the death of their children. However tenacious they may be of a narrow and rigid creed, which would consign an unconverted child to the regions of hopeless despair; yet when that unconverted, though dearly loved, one, without leaving any evidence of a saving change, is snatched away by death, and the fond parent is called to follow his lifeless remains to the silent grave, he has, in the midst of his grief, a hope that 'it is well with the child.' There may, indeed, be some exceptions to this rule; but such we verily believe to be the general rule, which a few exceptions cannot set aside. That such is the fact may be

inferred from the smile which is so soon seen upon the countenance of the bereaved parent, and from that settled resignation which he evinces to the will of God. Had he no hope, or, in other words, did he firmly believe that his child was in eternal torment, — did he realize this awful sentiment, he would never smile; and he could never experience that sweet reconciliation to God's will which is now his constant enjoyment.

"Now, it is evident that he must have some source of consolation; and what is it? It cannot be the creed to which he has felt such an attachment; for that teaches him that his child is lost forever. It cannot be the doctrine of endless misery, even in its mildest form, if it has any such form. Then what does give him consolation, and speak peace to his troubled spirit? I answer, without the fear of contradiction, it is a confidence in the inherent, unchanging goodness and impartial mercy of the Lord our God. To this source the mourner comes that his bleeding heart may be bound up, and that the tears may be wiped from his weeping eyes. He cannot believe that cruel demons are to sport forever with the destinies of *his* loved one; and that by the permission of Him who is denominated Love. He shudders when he thinks of his creed, and wishes, for the present at least, to banish all thoughts of it from his mind. In the bitterness of his agony he comes to the mercy of God, and here he finds that comfort which is denied him by human creeds. And what is this, dear reader, but Universalism? It is nothing else.

"We bid all such mourning ones a hearty welcome to this open Fountain; and the voice of Jesus must sound with sweetest melody in their ears, 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

May they cast from them their creeds, which are like 'broken cisterns that can hold no water,' and slake their thirst at the 'fountain of living waters.'" (84)

We find, in one of Mr. F. B. Carpenter's Reminiscences of President Lincoln, communicated to "The Independent," the following allusion to the President's grief under bereavement, and the method of its comfort:—

"William Wallace Lincoln died Thursday, Feb. 20, 1862. After the funeral the President resumed his official duties, but mechanically, and with a terrible weight at his heart. The following Thursday he gave way to his feelings, and shut himself from all society. The second Thursday it was the same; he would see no one, and seemed a prey to the deepest melancholy. About this time Rev. Dr. Vinton, of Trinity Church, New York, had occasion to spend a few days in Washington. An acquaintance of Mrs. Lincoln, and her sister, Mrs. Edwards, of Springfield, he was requested by them to come up and see the President. The setting apart of Thursday for the indulgence of his grief had gone on for several weeks, and Mrs. Lincoln began to be seriously alarmed for the health of her husband, of which fact Dr. Vinton was apprised. Mr. Lincoln received him in the parlor, and an opportunity was soon embraced by the clergyman to chide him for showing so rebellious a disposition to the decrees of Providence. He told him plainly that the indulgence of such feelings, though natural, was sinful. It was unworthy one who believed in the Christian religion. He had duties to the living, greater than those of any other man, as the chosen father and leader of the people, and he was unfitting himself for his responsibilities by thus giving way to his grief. To mourn the departed as *lost* belongs to heathen-

ism, not Christianity. 'Your son,' said Dr. Vinton, '*is alive*, in Paradise. Do you remember that passage in the Gospel, "God is not the God of the *dead*, but of the living, for *all* live unto him"?' Mr. Lincoln had listened as one in a stupor, until his ear caught the words, 'Your son is alive.' Starting from the sofa, he exclaimed, '*Alive! alive!* Surely you mock me.' — 'No, sir, believe me,' replied Dr. Vinton, 'it is a most comforting doctrine of the church, founded upon the words of Christ himself.' Mr. Lincoln looked at him a moment, and then stepping forward, he threw his arms around the clergyman's neck, and, laying his head upon his breast, sobbed aloud. '*Alive? alive?*' he repeated.

"'My dear sir,' said Dr. Vinton, greatly moved, as he twined his own arm around the weeping father, 'believe this, for it is God's most precious truth. Seek not your son among the dead; he is not there, he lives to-day in Paradise! Think of the full import of the words I quoted. The Sadducees, when they questioned Jesus, had no other conception than that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead and buried. Mark the reply: "Now, that the dead *are* raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for *all* live unto him!" Did not the aged patriarch mourn his sons as dead? "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin also." But Joseph and Simeon were both living, though he believed it not. Indeed, Joseph being taken from him, was the ultimate means of the preservation of the whole family. And so God has called your son into his upper kingdom, — a kingdom and an existence as real, more real than your own. It may be that he, too, like

Joseph, has gone, in God's good providence, to be the salvation of *his* father's household. It is a part of the Lord's plan for the ultimate happiness of you and yours. Doubt it not. I have a sermon,' continued Dr. Vinton, 'upon this subject, which I think might interest you.' Mr. Lincoln begged him to send it at an early day, thanking him repeatedly for his cheering and hopeful words. Through a member of the family, I learned that the sermon was sent, and read over and over by the President, who caused a copy to be made for his own private use, before it was returned. Upon the same authority, I have been informed that Mr. Lincoln's views in relation to spiritual things seemed changed from this hour. Certain it is that, henceforth, he ceased the observance of the day of the week upon which his son died, and gradually resumed his accustomed cheerfulness.

"Dr. Vinton is an Episcopalian, who would perhaps deride Universalism; and yet when he undertook to convey to the sorrowing President 'the exceeding comfort of the Holy Spirit,' he was constrained to adopt its influences. The fact that 'all live unto God,' is a comforting fact only if Universalism is true; if God is as gracious in the immortal as in the mortal life; if he is as intent upon the salvation of sinners there as here. How could this clergyman speak so confidently of Willie's being 'alive in Paradise,' save upon the doctrine that God's grace is infinite and abiding? Surely, 'to mourn the departed as *lost* belongs to heathenism — not Christianity.' Let us mourn *none* as lost; and let us not be ashamed of that interpretation of the Gospel which alone expresses its infinite superiority to heathenism; of that inference upon which alone our hearts may rest for comfort and peace." ⁽⁶⁾

FAITH IN UNIVERSALISM TRIUMPHANT.

The following is presented in proof of the triumphant features of Universalism. It refers to the life and death of Rev. Dr. T. Whittemore : —

“ And now in regard to his faith. Last autumn, — 1860, — when he thought he had but a few days to live, he said to a brother, who stood by his bedside, ‘ I have done all that I could — the time of my departure is at hand — I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith.’ These words were most true. No man in our denomination was more faithful to the great principles of Universalism than Mr. Whittemore. He loved the cause of Universalism above every other cause in the world, because he felt that it was God’s everlasting truth. In its defence he marched straight onward, never turning to the right hand nor the left, but moving forward triumphantly in his course, not heeding idle fables or vain philosophies. When infidelity, under various disguises, has tried to creep into our ranks, he always stood like a rock, against which the turbid waters, and sometimes the angry waves, beat, but lashed in vain.

“ When there were desertions from the ship he stood steadily at the helm, and with his faithful fellow-pilots guided the bark safely through the waves and kept it from the breakers. Himself a sincere believer in the Christian religion, he was ever jealous of the honor and of the good name of our denomination. And if he drew distinctly and sharply the denominational lines, it was from no ill-will to any one, but from his great love of the Bible as God’s word, and of distinctive Universalism as the divine truth. The banner he honored, and under which he fought, was

that of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if he sometimes poured a broadside upon the foe, or exposed the spies and the traitors in the ranks, it was from the honor of a true soldier, and his sincere love for the cause in which he was engaged.

“He sounded once, if not the depths, the shoals of infidelity, and knew the difference between faith and unbelief. And he lived to see more than one of these deserters, after having been tossed about in the surges, after having gone forth on weary wing, like Noah’s dove, but finding no solid ground to set their feet upon, returning tired and hungry, seeking the shelter and the comfort of the Ark of God, and he stretched forth his hand with welcome to take them in. And oh, how that faith to which he had been so true, was true to him when the time of his departure came! Absorbed as he was in matters pertaining to business and the world, having various financial interests that seemed to require his attention, it would seem not altogether unnatural that the struggle to let all these go would be somewhat severe, for nothing is more philosophically true than that ‘where our treasure is, there will our heart be also.’ So it was with him; he loved the world, he loved its riches; but consecrating all this, there was a love of God, a love of Jesus Christ, a consecration of his soul to the highest spiritual truths; and when there was so much of the world to live for, he willingly, when the hour came, resigned it all, for he had really greater treasures in heaven. And when down by the borders of the grave, and he seemed to be stepping into its shadows, he said to a brother who stood by his bedside, ‘My work is done; I leave my work behind me. What I have preached is the *truth*, nothing but the truth. I have nothing to take back — nothing — nothing.

I am almost surprised at my frame of mind, that I view my approaching departure with so little dread; but my faith is as strong as ever it was. I have got so far on the way that I do not know as I want to be called back again.' ”

“ His it was to feel the truth of what the apostle wrote: ‘This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.’ Brave man on the battle-field in fighting the good fight: putting on the ‘breastplate of righteousness;’ on his head the ‘helmet of salvation;’ grasping in his hand the ‘sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;’ shouting loud the battle-cry against the foe, his clear ‘Trumpet’ notes ringing out, calling for the onset; yet the old warrior, scarred in many a hard-fought battle, when the hour came to lay off his armor, it found Christ’s deep triumph and peace in his heart, and as he saw the flesh melting away, and the mental powers becoming feeble, with lips scarcely able to articulate, he lay like a valiant soldier crushed to death by a superior antagonist, yet refusing to yield a groan, and bearing the glance of defiance to the last. For, although death might crush the body, it could not touch his soul. And this could not have been, had he not steadily ‘kept the faith.’ The real victory is to be won, my friends, not on the dying bed, but before. When Jesus had gone forth from his struggle and prayer in Gethsemane; when his soul had been baptized in submission to God; when he had said, ‘Not my will, but thine, be done,’ — the real victory over the cross was gained. And so when the hour came he went calmly and triumphantly out to Calvary. And he who has this faith in his heart may begin the hymn of triumph now, for the victory is pledged. ‘Thanks be to God, which’ — not *shall* give,

but — ‘*giveth* us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ So it was with our brother. His victory did not come at his death-bed, it was wrought out before. When he came to that field to which so many look forward with apprehension and fear, the enemy was not to be found.

“ ‘No war, nor battle’s sound,
Was heard on all that ground;
No hostile chiefs to furious combat ran.’

And he pitched his tent in peace, sheathed his battle blade, and laid him down without alarm to his rest.” (122)

THESE ALL DIED IN THE FAITH.

“In solemnity of thought and feeling, I would revisit the scenes where the faithful have died, — where I have seen death made beautiful by the power of faith, — where I have seen the young and the aged Universalist die in triumph, — and where I have felt, —

“ ‘Our smitten friends
Are angels sent on missions full of love;
For us they languish, and for us they die.’

“The first time I ever saw the lip stilled, no more to move, I was in a familiar home as a minister of hope. A young and gentle wife was the subject. Her life had been marked continuously by amiability, and they who knew her loved her, and could not but love. She had been a mother, but the babe had been early called home. She thought of it as with Jesus, in the habitation of the blessed, and her dreams were the renewals of past happy days. But con-

sumption poured its slow poison into her blood, and death began its work. Hope and fear were for months the alternate visitors of the hearts of her friends, till, at last, fear only came. Weaker and weaker she became, but no fears to torture and oppress, and hasten her departure, came near her mind. The mild evening stars in the clear blue sky were not a more beautiful or true emblem of calmness than was she. Never, oh, never, did a tired babe lie down to sleep with more composure than she died. A dew-drop was never called up from the earth by the sun more gently and silently than her spirit passed away. Oh, what a smile of celestial pity would pass over her angelic countenance, were she to hear the enemy's assertion, — that no one ever died a Universalist! . . .

“I turn to another patient spirit, the last two years of whose life were full of suffering, interrupted by only short seasons of freedom from extreme weakness and pain. During the last year it may be said that she had been gradually dying; the poison of the disease (a cancer) continuing to diffuse itself throughout the system, corrupting the fountains of life. I attended her frequently. My first visit was peculiarly interesting. Intense pain and sweet pleasure were commingled. I have often stood by her when the greatest effort was needed to keep my tears from gushing out like a flood; so unwonted was the agonizing picture of human suffering. I have wept in spirit bitterly that she should suffer so much. And then her language was overwhelming to sensibility. ‘I know not,’ said she at one time, ‘why I should have to suffer so much; yet I know my heavenly Father is good and wise; and I am content!’ And the same sentiment was ever in her soul, a source of the purest comfort. During her whole sickness not

a murmur escaped her lips. 'My Father is wiser than I,' subdued every feeling of impatience. She was always glad to welcome visitors; and many daily entered her home, from all sects and classes. All felt, as they crossed her threshold, that they were entering the habitation of a Christian; and from the lips of many, of all orders, I have heard the confession, 'She is one of the most perfect women I ever saw; always good, and loved by all! And to each she would own that it was her faith in God's universal, unchanging love that made her all she was, and comforted her in her sickness. She loved God's house, the preaching of the word, the prayers and praises of his children; and this love was the strengthening angel to her spirit. She lingered long, waiting her release. No shadow ever came over her calm and holy confidence in God; and often did she say, that, were she not a believer in the truths of Universalism, she knew not how she could bear her sufferings; for that faith alone could present the unclouded heaven she delighted with the spirit's eye to gaze upon. That, to her, was home. Almost the last words she uttered were, 'I want to go home. I must go home. Do not wish to keep me here!' When the hour came, she resigned herself in calmness and true hope; and in death a sweet smile rested on her features, unaccompanied by a single trace of pain. Many felt it a duty to attempt to shake her faith. But as well might they have attempted with the same breath to blow out the sun. She was a happy victor over pain and death." (20)

The following has reference to the late Hon. Joseph Healey, of New Hampshire, whose happy death transpired at the age of eighty-five years,—surely a good, ripe old

age to go home. A ministering brother, who attended his funeral, writes thus of the good man : —

“ Few men have gone from our midst to the better world, whose lives have been more upright, useful, and honored than was his. And we are unwilling to consign to its kindred dust the cherished and manly form of an individual who has filled so wide a place in our own regards and the esteem and veneration of his fellow-men, without offering, as a memorial, the record of some of those excellences of mind, and heart, and character, which distinguished him in life. It is no easy matter to present a life-picture of any man, even where we may have known him intimately. But having enjoyed a long intimacy and happy acquaintance with the deceased, of thirty-nine years, and feeling it to be a sacred duty to present to the public a brief tribute to the memory of this excellent Christian man, I will endeavor, as concisely as possible, to body forth in words the conception of the most prominent features in the mental and moral portraiture of our departed brother, as they lie upon the tablets of my own mind. I do not give the memoir of a man who was *perfect*, — who was *faultless*. No one is so exempt from the weaknesses and imperfections of humanity as to be absolutely perfect. Some are far more perfect, — have far less faults than others. And here I will say, the subject of this notice approached as near the beau ideal of a perfect man as any one with whom I have had the happiness to be acquainted. He may have had his faults ; but I do not know what they were.

“ Again ; *his religious sentiments were strong and decided*. He was an enlightened and happy Christian. His philosophy was baptized in the fountain of eternal love. He loved the Saviour and his religion. And whilst he believed

nothing because it was time-honored and professed by others, he yet had a firm faith in the great doctrines of the Gospel. He was quite familiar with the sacred writings, and few could repeat more of them than he. He had been an enlightened and exemplary Universalist for more than sixty years. And though many, no doubt, may have regretted that such should be the faith of a man occupying the position that he did in the community, yet his blameless life was ever an irresistible argument against what they presumed to be the bad tendency of the faith he held, and had the honesty and independence to profess, countenance, support, and live for. He was extensively known in our denomination as a firm, consistent, and devoted Universalist; and, before his health failed, he often attended our associations and conventions, and frequently presided on those occasions with great dignity and propriety. His house was always open to the older and younger ministers. With a bland smile and cordial greeting he welcomed them to the hospitalities of his pleasant home." (III).

Here is a "*gem*" indeed, — one truly worthy with which to close this volume. It is a voice from that spiritual home into which all will at last be gathered to unite in eternal praises to Almighty God and the Lamb forever! (c)

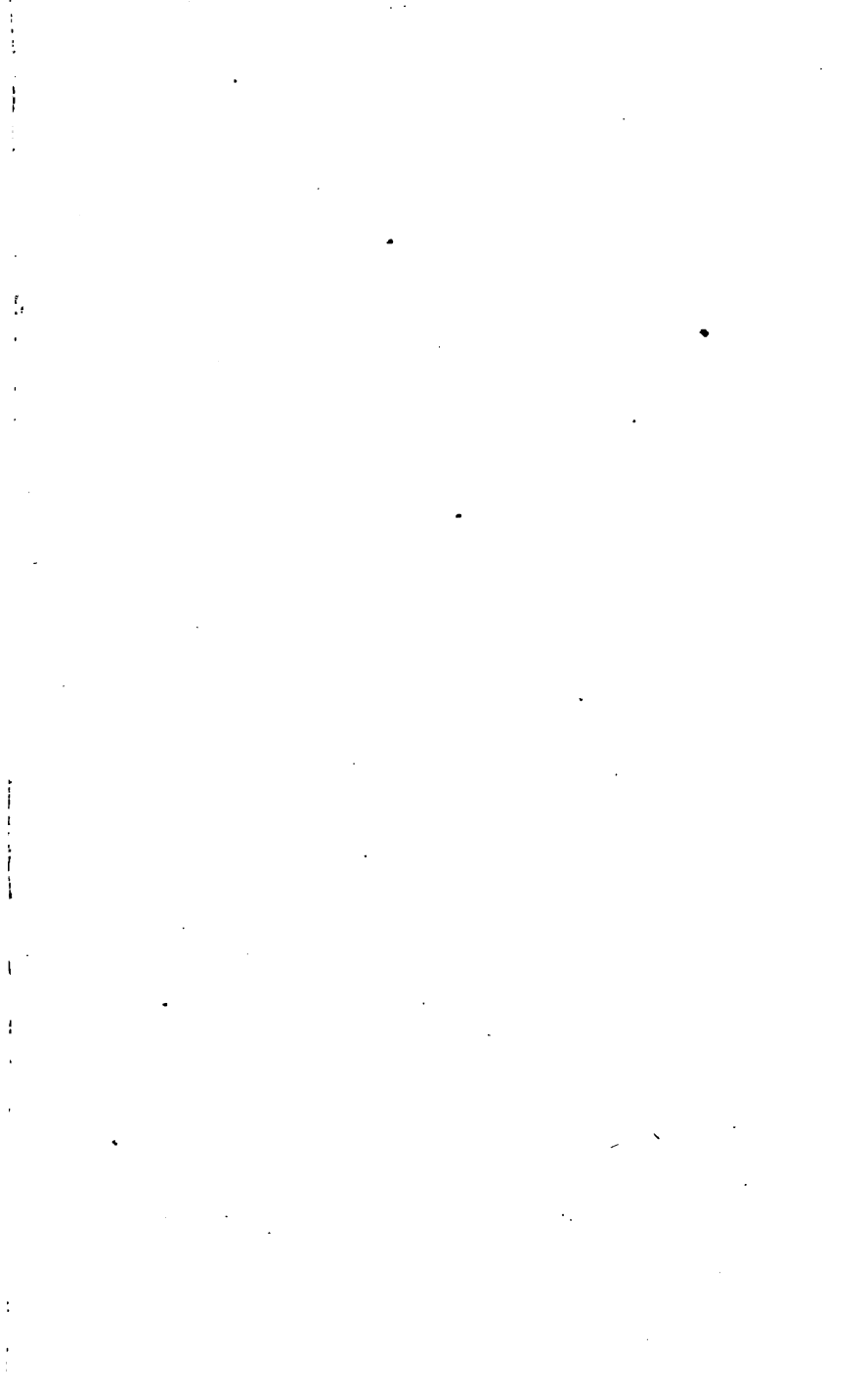
"I shine in the light of God;
His likeness stamps my brow;
Through the shadow of death my feet have trod,
And I reign in glory now.
No breaking heart is here,
No keen and thrilling pain,
No wasted cheek, where the frequent tear
Hath rolled and left its stain.

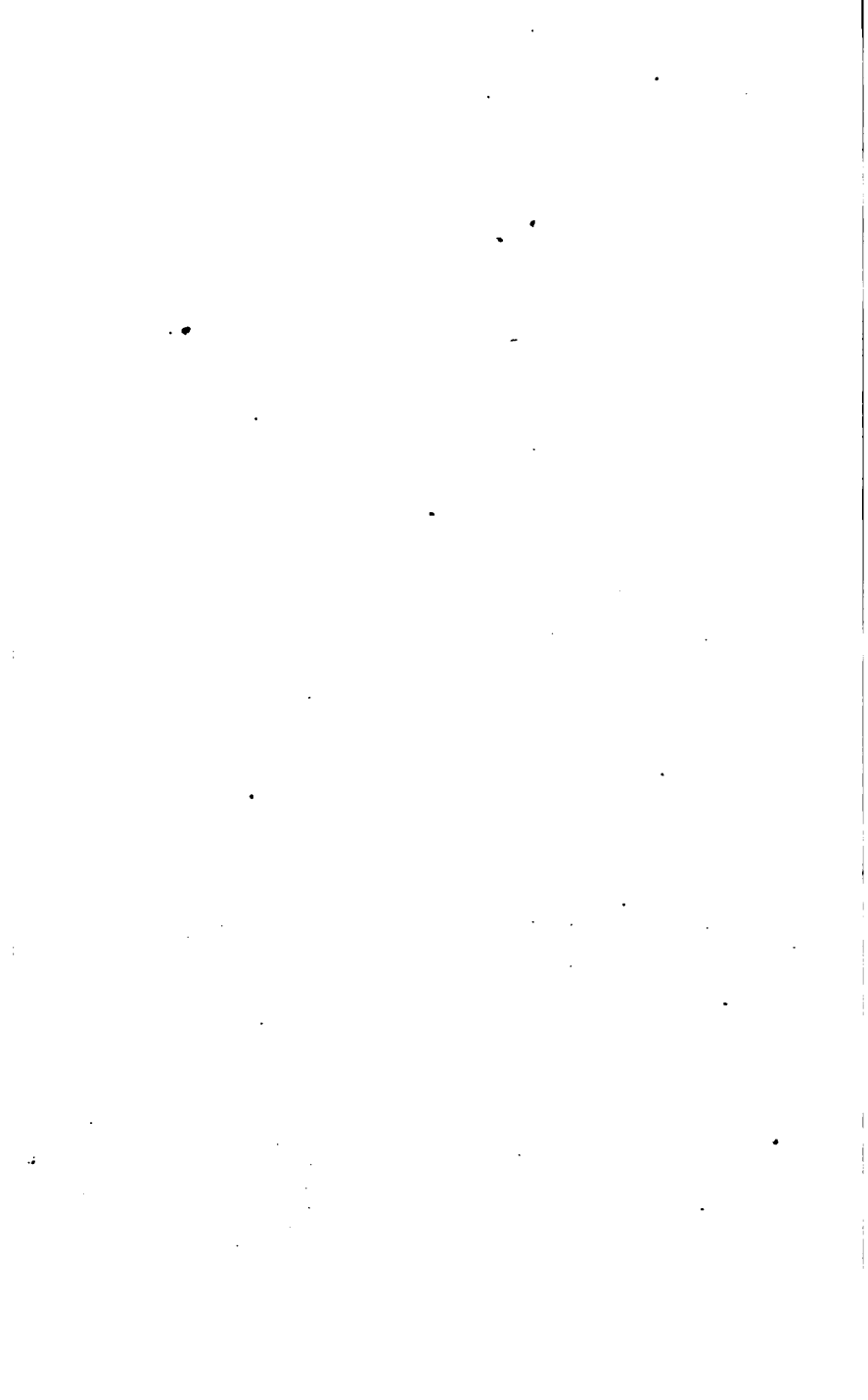
" I have found the joy of Heaven;
I am one of the angel band;
To my head a crown is given,
And a harp is in my hand;
I have learned the song they sing
Whom Jesus hath made free,
And the glorious halls of Heaven still ring
With my new-born melody.

" No sin, no grief, no pain;
Safe in my happy home;
My fears are fled, my doubt all slain,
My hour of triumph come.
O friends of my mortal years,
The trusted and the true,
Some walking still in the vale of tears,
I wait to welcome you !

" Do I forget ? oh, no !
For memory's golden chain
Shall bind my heart to the hearts below,
Till they meet and touch again.
Each link is strong and bright,
And love's electric flame
Flows freely down, like a river of light,
To the world from whence it came.

" Do you mourn when another star
Shines out in the glittering sky ?
Do you weep when the voice of war
And the rage of conflict die ?
Then why do your tears roll down,
And your hearts be sorely riven,
For another gem in the Saviour's crown,
And another soul in Heaven ? " (6)









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